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REAL LIFE

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my hands were
blown off'**

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FROM TRAGEDY TO TRIUMPH

She lost both her hands in a freak accident when she was just 13 and yet Malvika Iyer didn't let that stand in the way of her dreams. The schoolgirl was a fighter. Even when she had lost 80 per cent of her blood and her leg was hanging on by a thread of skin following a grenade explosion, she battled to live.

Doctors managed to save her mangled legs and she was determined to walk. Malvika then faced the uphill struggle to learn to write, feed herself, and even apply her make-up with artificial arms and hands.

Others might have wallowed in self-pity or plunged into depression, but she refused to cry – not even once – or feel sorry for herself. In fact, she realised she could inspire others and after graduating with top marks Malvika began giving motivational speeches to schoolchildren, culminating in a TED Talk – watched by hundreds of thousands around the globe. Today she has

Even when she had LOST 80 PER CENT of her BLOOD and her LEG was HANGING on by a THREAD of skin following a GRENADE EXPLOSION, she battled to live. She's a STRONG and BRAVE LADY

starred in her own documentary, has modelled, makes her own clothes, and inspires and motivates others. She even says in her real-life story on **page 20** that she is glad that she lost both her hands because it has encouraged her to help others. She's an incredibly strong and brave lady. Let me know what you think of her story and the rest of the issue. Until next week,

Karen

Karen Pasqual Jones, Editor
kpasqualijones@gulfnews.com

MY TOP THREE THIS WEEK I'M LOVING...

1 Beards are having a moment (on men of course!) but that's no excuse for rough skin. Vichy's Homme Idealizer Multi-action moisturiser 3-Day Beard Plus contains hyaluronic acid and caffeine to keep skin smooth and beards well groomed. Dh120, Boots



2 The summer heat plays havoc with my skin, often leaving it looking like an oil slick. Luckily I've found the perfect formula for flawless-looking matte skin – Benefit's License to Blot. One slick of this stick keeps my skin oil-free all day. Dh100, Sephora and Wojooh.



3 Specially formulated to easily remove make-up – even waterproof mascara – Guerlain Lash-protecting Biphase Pure Radiance Cleanser is gentle but effective and strengthens eyelashes at the same time. Genius! Available soon Paris Gallery. Dh220 (125ml)





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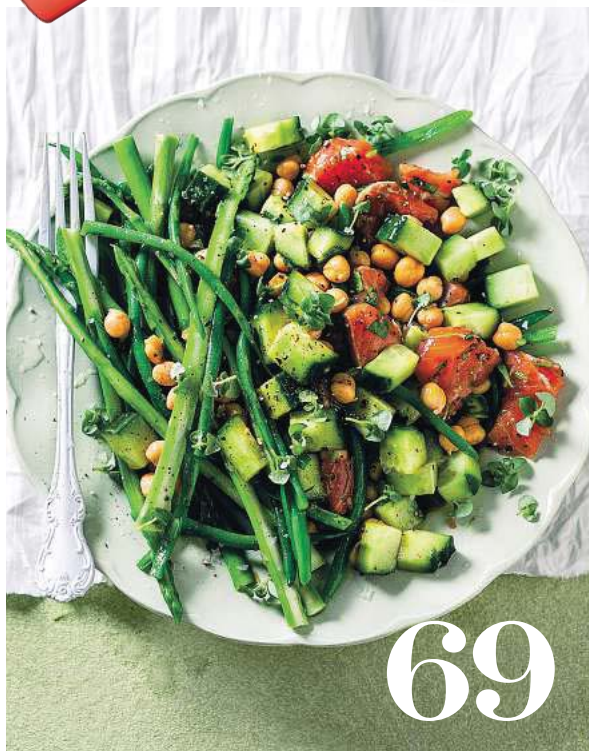
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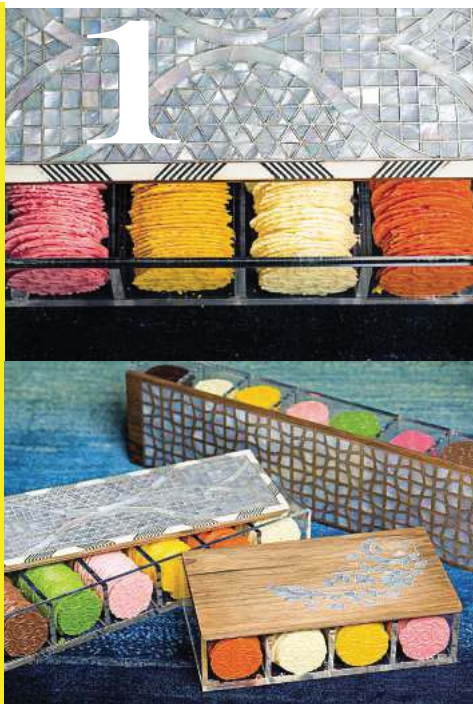
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LEISURE CHARTS

SO SWEET

These gorgeous creations from artisanal brand Couture Chocolate are on our wish list right now. The Beirut-based company's Belgian chocolate coins (in nine coloured flavours, from orange and rose to pistachio) are razor thin and luscious – and we love the exquisitely crafted hand-painted Moroccan wood boxes with coloured plexiglass and mother-of-pearl inlay, Ottoman Iznik tiles and Persian Qajar Paintings. You'll want to hold on to the box long after scoffing the goodies. From Dh385 at The Design Shop by S*uce. Call 04 388 3488 or visit www.shopatsauce.com.



Eat, play, love

OBJECT OF DESIRE



CAPE TOWN

Ever since Kylie Jenner rocked a baby pink Phillip Lim cape coat while attending New York Fashion Week earlier this year, we've been looking for ways to emulate the Kardashian sister's super-chic look. Cue Indian fashion line Kukoon's stunning range of capes in summery brights and cool neutrals. This short bolero-style white one in raw silk (Dh1,440) won't stifle in Dubai's perennial sunshine and its delicate black embroidery will instantly up the elegance of an LBD or even a pair of culottes. Available at Label 24, visit www.kukoonthelabel.com.

GO FOR GOLD

As far as everyday baubles are concerned, we always love a bit of sunny gold to brighten up our day. This elegant yet delicate chain-link necklace (Dh2,711) is part of the lightweight Oriana collection exclusive to GRT Jewellers, designed for modern women. The ethereal floral pendant and dull gold finish are glitzy enough for fancy occasions yet casual for day-to-day use. We love! The collection is available at the GRT Jewellers' first UAE store in Karama.



TASTE TOUR

Why dine at one restaurant when you can try seven in the same evening? The Ottoman Opulence dinner at Dubai's Jumeirah Zabeel Saray will see you enjoy a lavish seven-course meal – at seven fab restaurants. Enjoy canapés at Italian-inspired Plaj restaurant, starters at Indian restaurant Amala, Turkish mezzeh at Lalezar, hot Arabic mezzeh at Al Nafoorah, hearty steak at The Rib Room, fancy French dessert buffet at Imperium, and wrap it up at the regal Sultan's Lounge terrace for tea or coffee. From 7pm to 11pm. Dh1,490 for a couple. Call 04 453 0444 or email JZSRestaurants@jumeirah.com.

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Drop what you're doing and book in for Australia Medical Centre's skincare offer, just for *Friday* readers! All you have to do is mention the mag and your favourite page (this one!) and enjoy a 25 per cent discount on all facials and cosmetic services – even treatments like Botox and fillers – plus a free skin consultation (worth Dh100) with a dermatologist or beauty specialist. There's also a 40 per cent discount on three Cell Rejuvenation sessions that help remove acne and stimulate collagen. Valid until Monday (July 27). Hurry! Call 04 380 7774.



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HOROSCOPES

ARIES MAR 20 - APR 19



Ordinarily, you'd battle unfair situations. But before you do anything, ask questions. Worrying as certain

developments seem now, once you're better informed and have talked things through with loved ones, you'll realise these events aren't problems but timely breakthroughs.

TAURUS APR 20 - MAY 20



Nobody would blame you for grumbling about the changes you're faced with. But, in truth, such issues have been on your mind for ages, you just didn't know where to begin. However, it's time to tackle them. This will prepare you for next Friday's Full Moon, which highlights these matters.

GEMINI MAY 21 - JUN 20



With the Sun and your ruler Mercury accenting controversial matters, it's time to tackle them. But first gather vital facts. You'll

soon realise what once seemed crucial no longer is. So decide what's worth battling for and where you can – and should – give in.

LIBRA SEP 23 - OCT 22



With your ruler Venus in the most strategic portion of your chart and also retrograde, life's about reflecting on what must

go, not planning for the future. The resulting insights will explain a lot and, as important, allow you to reconsider even long-standing priorities.

SCORPIO OCT 23 - NOV 21



Unwise as recent developments seem, and annoying as the changes they're forcing you to make may be, ultimately this is for the best. You're shedding burdensome arrangements. That alone is good but will be a relief when sudden and exciting offers require considerable time and commitment.

SAGITTARIUS NOV 22 - DEC 21



Right now it's unwise to give advice to others as they're venturing into risky territory. Focus on new ideas instead. The more you learn now, the better prepared you'll be for the cycle that begins when Jupiter moves into a new sign on August 11.



STARGAZING

Shelley von Strunckel, one of the world's top astrologers, writes a weekly forecast for *Friday*

CANCER JUN 21 - JUL 22



While some of the insights triggered by the Cancer New Moon on July 16 were so clear you acted on them immediately, others have taken time to understand. Until early August, you'll be dealing with these. Any concerns this raises vanish as better options come your way.

LEO JUL 23 - AUG 22



Both your ruler the Sun and the communication planet Mercury have moved into Leo, giving you a chance to finally deal with persistent concerns. However, things have changed more than you realise. So, ask questions before you make any decisions.

VIRGO AUG 23 - SEP 22



Between doubts and unexpected issues, you're unsure what to do. For now, focus on decluttering your life. This clears the way for the stunning cycle of growth that begins when Jupiter moves into Virgo on August 11. The lighter you travel then, the better.

CAPRICORN DEC 22 - JAN 19



Letting others make unwise decisions isn't usually your style. Yet certain individuals are sure they're right. Since they need to learn the facts for themselves, busy yourself elsewhere. What you learn could make you wonder why you've been wasting time on those who are so stubborn.

AQUARIUS JAN 20 - FEB 17

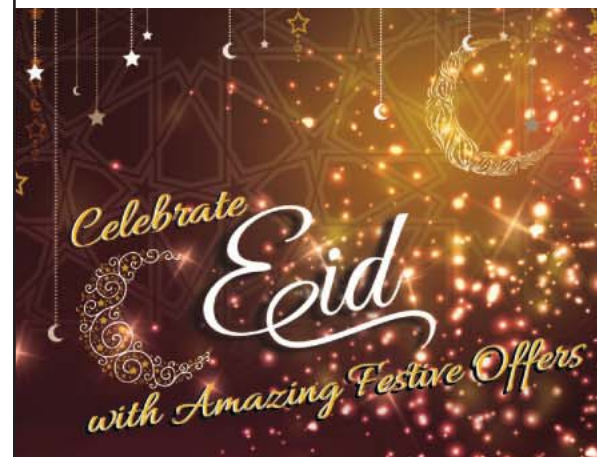


Next Friday's Aquarius Full Moon brings both personal concerns and issues involving others to a head. Invest time in gathering facts and reflecting on your priorities and, when decisions are pressing, you'll be ready to take an informed decision.

PISCES FEB 18 - MAR 19



The changes certain events are ushering in are a relief. If there's any challenge, it's that you must leave some arrangements loose, at least for now. This is best, since during early August, even complex matters will simply fall into place.



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GALLERY

Life through your lens, our pick of your best pictures

ADITI BHATIA says the combination of a cloud-speckled sky and a solitary bird testing its wings, made her reach for her camera



The serenity of the backwaters of Kerala makes it feel as if time has stood still, says VIKRAM GOPI



DR SHABEEN PARAMBATH
admires how the Dubai
skyline glitters at night

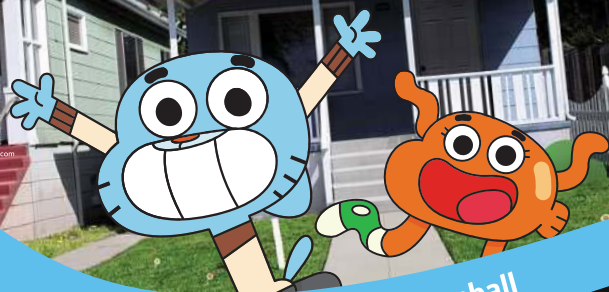


SHIVEN CHATURVEDI was moved
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FIPP

INBOX



From helping street kids via soccer, to gadget and Goldfish syndrome – last week's issue got you thinking...

PEOPLE LIKE SYLVESTER PETER

are living proof of what generosity is all about ('From slums to soccer stardom', July 17). Here's a man who not only gave New Delhi's street kids a chance for a better life by teaching them football, but nurtured them so that they became better human beings, and are now able to make a positive contribution towards society.

I hope Sylvester is able to take his crusade to the rest of the country.

Rabul Mathur, via email

THE INTERVIEW WITH Sylvester

Peter and his soccer kids from New Delhi was really uplifting.

It's stories like these that really reach out to us readers and inspire us to contribute towards society. If there's anybody selflessly making a difference, it must be Sylvester.

I wonder why we don't hear more of such positive stories. I am sure there are many people who are doing their bit to bring light to this dark world.

Carrie McDaniel, Fujairah

I ENJOYED READING the feature on how gadgets are affecting our attention span ('Goldfish syndrome', July 17). It was worrying to learn that spending so much time looking at screens means we can't focus on one thing for more than eight seconds.



What will happen to all the children growing up with this technology? With such poor concentration capabilities, I wonder how they're going to manage high-precision jobs that require their undivided attention.

I hope schools take note of this article and introduce some kind of digital detox so that kids are able to develop their potential in a more effective way.

Vedika K, via email

I THOUGHT THE REAL-LIFE

story on Nidhi Jhaveri ('I've been losing hair since I was six but I won't lose my dignity', July 17) was wonderful. It must have been traumatic for a little girl to see all her hair fall out and then experience insensitive questions, stares and sympathy on a daily basis.

Fortunately her parents have taught her to focus on her talents and other strengths and not be bothered by her condition. She is a brave girl with a positive outlook towards life and I hope she stays that way.

Bianca F., via email



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Top Dh4,130, Brunello Cucinelli at Harvey Nichols



Sunglasses Dh690, O Concept



Casa candle holder Dh58, Indigo Living



Armchair Dh2,995, The One



Ornament Dh155, Zara Home



Bookcase Dh2,695, The One



Scented candle Dh145 for 70g, Diptyque at The Dubai Mall



Firming serum Dh544, Bakel at Harvey Nichols



COMPILED BY JUDY COGAN/SHREEJA RAVINDRANATHAN PHOTOS BY GETTY

A portrait of Malvika Iyer, a woman with long, dark, wavy hair, wearing a black top and a patterned shawl. She has a bindi on her forehead and is smiling slightly. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

'I'M GLAD BOTH MY HANDS WERE BLOWN OFF'

She was only 13 when she lost both her hands in a freak accident but rather than wallow in self-pity, Malvika Iyer uses her situation to inspire others.

Tessy Koshy meets her



Dressed in a white top and long black skirt, Malvika Iyer smiled at the 200-strong audience of young people in Chennai, India.

'I have a piece of advice for you all,' she began. 'If you ever need a makeshift hammer, don't grab a grenade you might find outside your house.'

'I did, and now I'm a bilateral amputee. That was 13 years ago and I was a little stupid then. I think I'm wiser now.'

On a warm May afternoon in 2002, Malvika, then 13, was playing outdoors in Bikaner, Rajasthan. She was enjoying her school summer holidays and looking around her back garden for something heavy enough to hammer a pretty accessory on to the back pocket of her jeans. Searching



Doctors wanted to amputate Malvika's left leg but her parents stopped them. Their daughter had already lost both her hands



nothing of them left. The explosion had ripped them right off.

Hearing the blast her parents – mother Hema Krishnan, 49, a homemaker, and father B Krishnan, 56, an engineer – rushed outside. 'I can still hear my mother's screams echo in my ears,' says Malvika. "'Meri bacchi ke haath chale gaye (my daughter's hands are gone)', she was yelling.'

Then the schoolgirl passed out. She lost

'I have a bit of advice. If you ever need a makeshift HAMMER don't grab a GRENADE you might find outside your house. I did and now I'm a bilateral AMPUTEE. That was 13 years ago - I'm a little wiser now'

around the plants and shrubs, she found a grenade shell. It had fallen there months earlier when an ammunition depot on the outskirts of the city had caught fire and in the ensuing blast rained hand shells and grenades across the neighbourhood.

Assuming it was a spent shell, the teenager picked it up and tried to hammer the accessory on to her old jeans. It was live and exploded in her hands.

'The deafening sound nearly knocked me out,' she says. 'But I knew something serious had happened to my hands because they weren't there any more. There was almost

both hands in the blast: the left from just below the elbow and the right from the wrist. Splinters from the shell also severely injured both her legs. Her left leg was hanging on to her knee by just a few strands of flesh, while the right leg was a mass of blood and gore.

Within five minutes an ambulance arrived and started rushing Malvika to hospital. On the way her blood pressure crashed and she lost 80 per cent of her blood. The nearest hospital, which she was taken to, wasn't equipped to treat such a major accident and the doctors there initially





Malvika's myo-electric arms mimic human anatomy and motion by using electrical signals generated by her own muscles

contemplated amputating her left leg. 'However, my parents refused. I'd lost two hands and losing a leg would have been too much. The doctors made me stable and then my parents requested that I be transferred to a bigger hospital in the state capital Jaipur, about four hours away.'

Once she was admitted in Jaipur Hospital and the doctors had saved her life – and her left leg – she came round and apologised to her mother for putting her through such an ordeal. 'I also wanted to see some of my good friends,' she says. 'I was terrified that

full of agony and pain, I lived in hope that one day I would walk again.'

She had some times when she was exhausted and her mood was low. 'There were days when I felt I wouldn't make it and was very sorry for myself,' she admits. 'But my mother was a pillar of strength and the spirit of those around me kept me buoyant.'

Luckily, the doctors were able to save both her legs. 'I'm left with two stumps for arms. But my right one is quite long so I can use it to lift things,' she says.

Ten months and eight operations later, in

I was determined to walk.' A month later, she was given a frame to help. 'Those days and nights were filled with pain,' she says.

After a couple of months of intense therapy Malvika took a first few painful but unaided steps. She was also fitted with a pair of myo-electric arms that are designed to mimic human anatomy and motion by using electrical signals generated naturally by your own muscles. They run on batteries and cost Rs500,000 (Dh28,870). 'They

'The ELECTRIC arms opened up a whole NEW WORLD as I could now write, use a spoon to eat, comb my hair and APPLY make-up. I started GOING OUT often and that really boosted my CONFIDENCE'

it would be the last time I'd ever see them.'

But Malvika was a fighter and underwent surgery after surgery. First were skin grafts from her thighs to close the wounds on her arms and legs.

'The pain was excruciating,' she says, 'but I used to always co-operate with the doctors and nurses. I never made a scene, though sometimes the agony was too much and I couldn't stifle a scream. I dreaded the time the nurses used to do the dressings, but I always remained strong; I would ask them questions about what they were doing.'

'The doctors were very impressed with me and often told my parents that I was very brave. Although those months were

March 2003, Malvika was well enough to be taken to the Bone and Joint Clinic in Chennai for therapy. 'My grandparents were based in Chennai and they suggested that I be taken there, hoping it would hasten the process of healing and rehabilitation.'

There Malvika underwent three more operations over six months including grafting bone taken from her mother's hips to strengthen her shattered and mangled legs. She was then left with her legs in plaster for months before the casts were finally removed in September and Malvika was given crutches to help her walk.

'The pain was just unbearable,' she recalls. 'It was like walking on red-hot cinders. But

opened a whole new world for me as I could write, use a spoon to eat, comb my hair and apply make-up,' she says. 'The hands gave me a new lease of life, especially in public. I started going out often and that really boosted my confidence.'

That year her friends were busy preparing for class 10 board exams. Malvika had spent 18 months in hospital learning to do everything from scratch. She had missed so much class work, but with just three months before the exams in March 2004 she decided to give it her best shot. 'I put all my energies into my studies determined to do well.'

Malvika joined a private study centre in Shenoy Nagar to catch up. 'Before the

accident I was a complete outdoorsy person and not very academically oriented. But now I was stuck indoors, I invested most of my time in my textbooks. I used to study alone for about four hours every day and then put in my best at the study centre as well. By the time the exams began I was pretty confident that I would do well,' she says.

To her surprise, Malvika scored 1,137 out of 1,200 in her 12th Board Examination, with full marks in commerce, and emerged top among privately educated students in that state. 'The crowning glory was getting to meet the former president of India Dr APJ Abdul Kalam. I was invited to his office for my achievement.'

Her success story was widely covered by the local media and Malvika became a celebrity of sorts. 'It was amazing to be featured on the pages of all the local newspapers. I also got a cash award and certificate of appreciation from the former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M Karunanidhi. The famous Tamil actor Arvind Swamy sent me a bouquet and a cake,' she smiles.

Thanks to her good marks, Malvika was offered a place at Delhi's prestigious St Stephen's College to study economics. At first she was thrilled but soon realised how much harder it was for her because of her disability.

'I was trying desperately to be normal and do all the things my classmates were doing but it was exhausting for me,' she says.

'I would get tired easily. That's when I accepted my reality.' She also realised she could help others by revealing what she had gone through and motivating them.

So after graduating she applied to the Delhi School of Social Work. 'My mom had also encouraged me to work for the differently abled as she felt I'd be able to motivate others. During my field training, I had the opportunity to work with differently abled children,' she says. 'I realised this is something I had to be a part of. I could empathise with them and understand them. As I'd been given a lot of encouragement, I wanted to give something back.'

Malvika was invited to give talks at schools. 'I enjoyed those moments when I could encourage other children to do their best,' she says. But it was her first TED talk in November 2013 that made her a household name among motivational speakers. After telling her story she was given a standing ovation and some of the students came up to give her a hug. It made her feel she could really help people.

After getting a first in her MPhil in Social Work, Malvika soon went on to become a



From TED talks to youth forums around the globe, Malvika is trying to change perceptions and inspire people



Malvika has no regrets – she says she can't blame anyone for the accident and has never even cried over what happened

regular speaker at youth gatherings and disability conferences. She has also spoken at youth forums in South Africa, Indonesia and Norway, attended the India Economic Summit 2014 held in Hotel Taj Palace in New Delhi and was also recently awarded the REX Karmaveer Chakra Global Fellowship, which recognises people who have the courage of their convictions to think differently and bring about change.

Her mother directed a short film, *The Phoenix*, documenting how Malvika battled back from her injuries. In the movie she's shown leading a normal life – going to the beach with friends, taking public transport, helping out at home and laughing with family and friends. She hopes to continue to inspire others, and refuses to dwell on the accident or look back.

'I used to get upset at times when I could not wear certain kinds of clothes,' she says. 'And not being able to dance was extremely upsetting as I loved kathak and wanted to learn many other forms of dance. But I couldn't blame anyone for the accident so didn't harbour any regrets. I have never sat down and cried about what happened. I knew I was never going to get my hands or full use of my legs back.'

'The accident was a terrible experience but sometimes I thank god it happened or else my life would not have been as incredible as it is today.'

THE TRASH ICEBERG

Millions – some say billions – of tonnes of plastic is floating in our oceans, creating an environmental disaster just waiting to happen. Some rubbish piles are the size of Texas, but what's on the surface is just a fraction of what lies beneath. A fact-finding odyssey in a trimaran may change that, says **Mike Peake**



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We're a world of plastic, and we're not talking credit cards here. According to a recent study, the planet's coastal populations inadvertently let around eight million tonnes of plastic tumble into the oceans every year. Other reports suggest that this is just part of a much larger amount – added to by fishing fleets and trash floating in from rivers – that is thought to total up to 25 million tonnes per year. China and Indonesia are the worst offenders, but it is truly a global problem in which pretty much all countries with a coastline add to the burden.

Incredibly, some estimates state that the combined weight of all plastics floating in the sea currently totals not just in the millions of tonnes but in the billions. One rather mind-blowing estimate even puts it at 260 billion tonnes – the equivalent of 37 tonnes for every person on earth.

Whichever figure you believe, it all adds up to a lot of plastic – and it's a problem that continues to vex the scientific community, who sense an environmental disaster waiting to happen. Even the UK's Prince Charles has weighed in, telling an audience in ➤



The Race for Water odyssey is expected to last around 300 days and aims to gather a better picture of the pollution we are inflicting on our oceans





Left: The crew set off from Bordeaux in March; Above: Marco aims to raise awareness of this global problem; Below: Stopover at Bermuda

Washington in March that half of all marine mammals have plastic in their gut and that “by 2025 there will be one tonne of plastic for every three tonnes of fish in the sea.”

It is not, says the future King of England, what anyone would call ‘encouraging’.

But oceans are strange, moving things, too vast to monitor accurately and too spread out to be within the remit of any single government. Accordingly, the five major floating rubbish piles (they are known as ‘trash gyres’) in the middle of our oceans have been largely ignored.

To try to change that, a Swiss entrepreneur, Marco Simeoni, has taken to the seas on a magnificent racing trimaran with a towering 29m main sail. It’s about as unlikely a



HALF of all marine mammals have plastic in their GUT. By 2025 there will be ONE tonne of plastic for every THREE tonnes of FISH

research vessel as you can get, but by combining the speed and urgency that goes with an ocean race with the seriousness of a scientific voyage, he believes Race For Water will raise public awareness of the problem.

Race For Water is an enormous undertaking. Expected to last around 300 days and 64,300km, this odyssey in a 21m-long trimaran will test Marco – a keen sailor – and his five crew to the max.

Unsurprisingly, one of the first people recruited for the voyage was noted Swiss yachtsman Stève Ravussin, a former winner

of the Route du Rhum transatlantic sailing race. He will help Marco to follow the plastic trail to the north and south Atlantic, the north and south Pacific, and the Indian ocean. Along the way they will study island beaches where plastic washes up, including the Azores, Easter Island, Tristan da Cunha and – in the Indian Ocean – Rodrigues and the Chagos islands. The aim is to return with a far better picture of just what pollution ‘crimes’ we are inflicting upon our oceans.

On an unseasonably chilly spring day in the historic French riverside city of

Bordeaux, Friday is invited along to see the Race For Water trimaran as it prepares for departure. While undeniably impressive for a sailing vessel, it is nonetheless a small place to imagine six strapping men holed up for almost a year.

There are just two berths, and the entire living space seems no bigger than a mid-sized RV. There is a two-ring cooker, a small bank of computers used for navigation and lots of waterproof bags filled with kit. It is no place to linger if you are claustrophobic.

Nets that form walkways across the trimaran’s span appear to the uninitiated like a vast expanse of extra space to lounge around, but the crew explain that with winds up to 60mph in your face, whenever you’re ‘up top’ all you’re usually looking for is something to hunker down behind.

None of this seems to be of the slightest concern to Marco, however. Personal comfort and places to work on his tan seem to be the last thing on his mind.

By the time you read this, the Race For Water team will have put in thousands of miles of their journey, but in Bordeaux, the mileage counter was still at zero. We found Marco in a contemplative mood...

‘I love to sail,’ he says, ‘and what I have been seeing more and more these past 10 years is the amount of trash in our oceans. I want to see where it ends up, so that we can do something about it.’

Since most of these garbage piles are far from the coastlines of most countries, no one nation is willing to take responsibility for it or fund its clean up. In fact, experts believe any effort to clean up these garbage



Race for Water is an enormous undertaking – marine traffic, garbage piles and numerous storms mean this is no pleasure cruise

piles would require so much financially, that it could bankrupt the country.

The only solution, experts believe, is to prevent these masses from growing further. But that is no easy solution either. Since some of the microplastics floating in the ocean are as big as some of the sea animals, nets designed to catch the garbage would catch these animals as well. As for designing nets that would just catch garbage – the size of the oceans makes this job far too time-consuming to consider.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Marine Debris Program has estimated that it would take 67 ships one year to clean up less than 1 per cent of the North Pacific Ocean.

Marco admits that he really doesn't know what to expect, or indeed what the trash piles will look like, beyond 'not very nice'.

No one knows for sure exactly how much plastic is in the oceans, and estimates are hampered greatly by the fact that not all of it floats. The UK's *Guardian* newspaper reported in December that a British and Spanish team had discovered that tiny pieces of plastic were to be found at depths of up to 3km, and at volumes 1,000 times greater than at the top.

The garbage floating on the surface is the tip of the plastic iceberg.

The best-known of the oceans' trash gyres is the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, a vast area of semi-submerged junk said to be the size of Texas. It fails to truly capture the

public's imagination, though, because there are no dramatic photographs showing the extent of its horrors. Much of its bulk is comprised of plastic particles suspended beneath the surface, making for something of a disappointing photo opportunity.

'We will see this garbage patch and all of the others – it's a big job,' says Marco, whose team have been educated in the protocols of scientific research. It is vital that they return with data that proves useful – and the scientific community is right behind them.

'Similar expeditions so far have generally investigated one gyre per mission,' says Carl Gustaf Lundin, director of The International Union for Conservation of Nature – one of Race For Water's many partners. 'This expedition is unique in that it will evaluate, for the first time, the quantities and types of floating plastic in all five of the planet's gyres.'

In Bordeaux, Marco laughs that one of his main goals for the voyage is to 'not break the boat'. He's only half-joking; far bigger craft have found themselves in trouble at sea, and Marco admits to a particular apprehension about most of the left hand side of the Pacific. 'It's very difficult to sail there because there's a lot of marine traffic, lots of garbage and a lot of storms,' he says. 'It's going to be tough.'

Aboard the trimaran, a businesslike air prevails. The last thing on anyone's mind is a pleasure cruise; each member of the team has been allowed to pack just 11kg of personal items – including clothes. Food is a long way short of gourmet, coming dried, space-station style, in packs. 'There's no Monopoly

board!' laughs Marco. 'At sea, there is always something to do – whether that's to do with the boat, the weather or the route. You have to try to anticipate what's coming, and you have to eat, to keep energy levels up. It gets very cold during the night when you're sailing and you use up a lot of energy.'

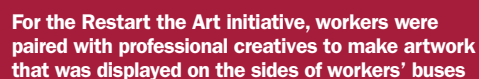
Planned in 22 'steps', the voyage will see the team pause briefly to restock in 14 different countries, including the US, Chile, South Africa and Japan. Upon their return in the New Year, the next part of the mission begins: making sense of what they've found. 'Ultimately, our aim is to find solutions to try to collect the plastics in the sea,' says Marco, 'and we are also thinking about what to do with it all. Because it is made with petrol there is a lot of energy in there and we're looking at ways to transform it.'

The Indian Ocean garbage gyre – the trash vortex that is closest to the UAE – is to be found approximately 6,000km away, a couple of thousand km or so east of Madagascar. It gathers there because of ocean currents and is thought to occupy two million square miles. We ask Marco what the UAE – and the world – can do to help.

'We'd love the UAE and the world to get involved. I'm not against plastics – you can do great things with them – but the problem is what happens when they've been used. Over 30 per cent of the world's production of plastics are used just one time, and for just a few minutes. We need to change that.'

www.raceforwater.com

A Dubai enterprise aims to bring together different nationalities and communities and break down divisions through innovative projects. **Colin Drury** discovers how...





One + One encourages interaction between mainstream and special needs school children



The Sameness Project's Aimee, Lina, Jonny and Fiona want to bring together people from different communities who might not normally meet such as Navdeep and Amani (below)

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For the organisers the most profound moment they witnessed was a conversation between Navdeep Singh and Amani Al Shaali.

He is an Indian construction worker, and she's an Emirati artist. In 2014, the pair were partnered together as part of a project in which 44 workers were matched with 44 professional creatives, and each couple was asked to produce a painting together. The finished results were eventually recreated on two workers' buses for all of Dubai to enjoy, and then exhibited at The Jamjar gallery in Al Quoz.

Jonny Kennaugh, one of the people behind the initiative, explains why the meeting between the two made such an impression on him. 'Navdeep created this image of a heart being broken to show how he missed his family,' he recalls. 'And Amani said, "I know how you feel because I have hurt like this too", and there was this real connection.'

'These two people who you look at and think they could never have anything in common, there can't

be any mutual ground there, they are suddenly bonding profoundly. They had this moment of humanity. And from there, they became close. They recognised the similarities in each other. It wasn't just those two either. There were some artists who ended up becoming good friends with the labourers. I know two of them still socialise today. They'll go out for dinner every few weeks.'

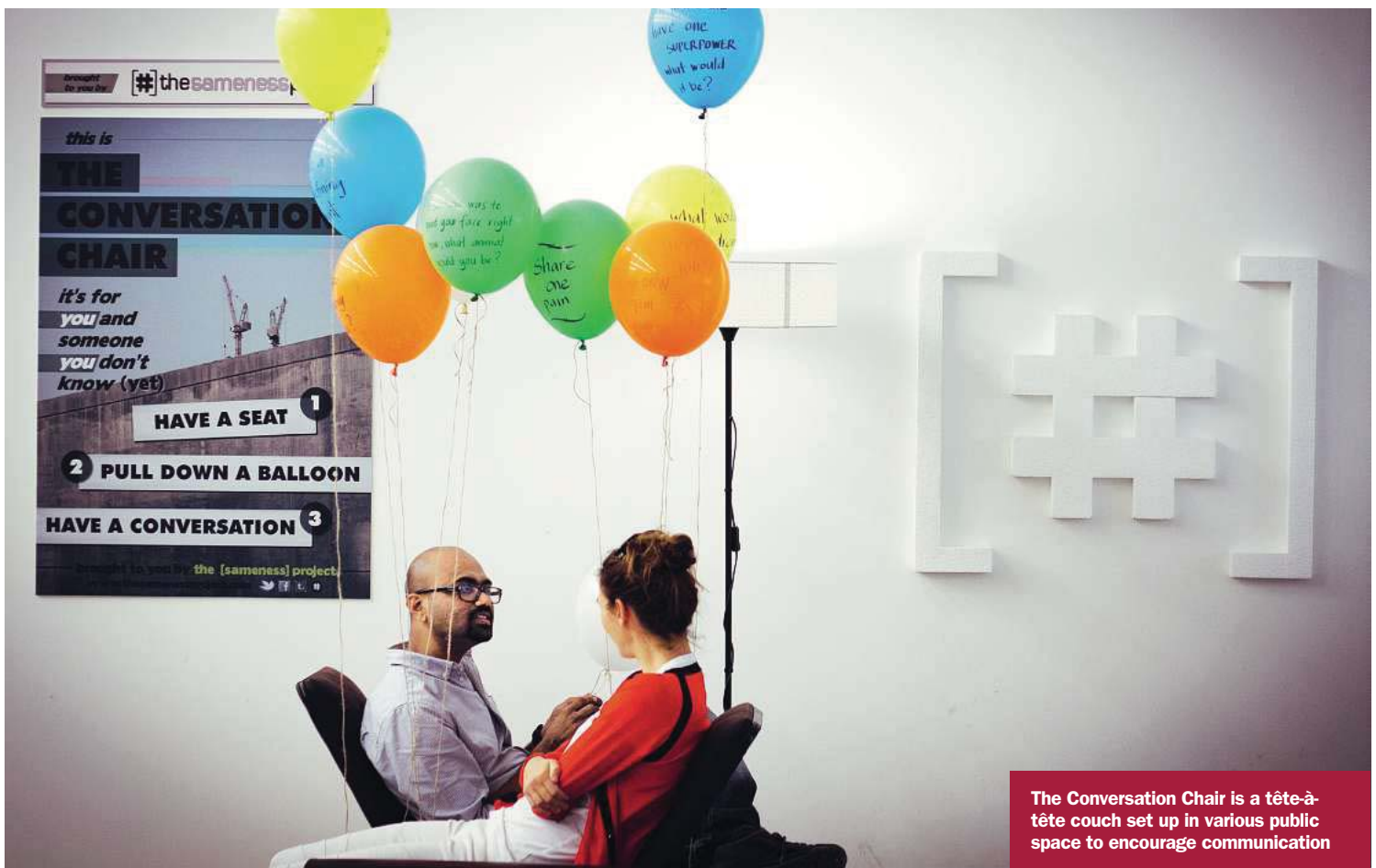
Thus, the Sameness Project racked up another success.

You may have heard of this enterprise, or at least you may have heard of the work it does.

Back in 2011, Palestinian Lina Nahhas and New Zealand native Jonny set up their business aiming to encourage cohesion and to break down divisions in Dubai. Lina, a successful market researcher, had decided while travelling through Palestine that she wanted to do something to promote a sense of shared experience in Dubai. So she sold her company and set up the Sameness Project with friend Jonny and his wife Aimee, and they hired a fourth person, Fiona Hepher, to help.

Through projects like Restart the Art – the one Navdeep and Amani took part in – the pair





wanted to bring together different people from different communities who might not normally meet.

The idea is to generate funding from major companies keen to show corporate responsibility, and then use this money to facilitate moments of 'sameness'. As 43-year-old Lina explains, it's all about creating 'moments where we can look past

greatest joy? Their greatest pain? Their greatest dream? And the results were just phenomenal.'

Another project run by the company is We've Got Your Back, which links fitness professionals in Dubai with the city's taxi drivers. It has seen some 600 cabbies given free booklets of detailed stretches and exercises that they can perform to

instructor, saw a taxi driver cricking his neck. 'They got talking and the guy said sitting down all day resulted in stiffness and so my friend gave him a few tips on how to relieve it. He was telling me about it and I thought what an amazing idea, we could do that city wide. So we did.'

It was appreciated too. 'Now I do the stretches in the morning

'It was all about building those RELATIONSHIPS between LABOURER and ARTIST but what really surprised us was how TALENTED some of the guys were. The results were PHENOMENAL'

the things that separate us from one another and see what makes us the same'.

To that end, their four-person business runs several projects that are designed to make such situations possible. Restart the Art was just one.

'We were stoked at how it went,' says 31-year-old Jonny today at the company's headquarters in the Al Hudaiba Awards Complex in Al Mina. 'It was all about building those relationships between labourer and artist but what really surprised us was how crazy talented some of the guys were. We asked them to keep three questions in mind: Their

combat the physical stresses of sitting for hours at a time.

The hints and tips in the booklet are compiled by Grant Goes, the founder of FitnessLink, and promote long-term physical health and emotional well-being. Indeed, it's been such a success, Majid Al Futtaim – which owns Mall of the Emirates and City Centre Deira – has asked for the booklets and information sessions to be given to its blue collar workers such as cleaners and security staff.

The idea came about, says Jonny, when a friend of his, who is a fitness

and I feel better than before,' one Bangladeshi driver, Moshuir Rahman, noted. 'I feel it's very helpful. It can give us a more comfortable life.'

The company has also run Water For Worker projects ('We give out a facecloth with "we care about you" written on it in seven languages') and something called the Conversation Chair. For the latter, they take an old French tête-à-tête couch, set it up somewhere in the city – in a park or outside a gallery, for example – and encourage a passer-by to take a seat.

'Then we wait for someone else to



Water for workers comes with a facecloth saying 'We care about you'



We've Got Your Back has helped labourers and drivers deal with aches and strains



Construction companies Al Futtaim Carillion and Khansaheb supported the Restart the Art campaign.

'Without businesses engaging, we couldn't carry on,' says Jonny. 'We need that support from them. Through their investments they will directly engage with the community in a really positive way.'

The team is also planning more initiatives. They've set up One + One, a scheme to bring together children from mainstream education with counterparts from special needs schools, and Know Thy Neighbour, which encourages people to invite those who live in the same street or block over for dinner.

'There's no end to the possibility of where we can go,' says Jonny. 'Dubai is such a wonderful city and it makes us very proud to think we're trying to help even more people have a positive experience of it.'

come along, take an interest and sit down opposite,' explains Jonny. 'We tie balloons to the chair and each one has a conversation starter – such as, "What superpower would you have?" – attached to it. And in that way these complete strangers share this very brief moment together.'

Or sometimes not that brief, it seems. 'In Safa Park, we had this American guy and a Lebanese girl sitting there,' he recalls. 'The conversation starter was "What is your greatest pain?" and he, very openly, said his brother had cancer. And she said how her brother had been diagnosed with mental health issues. And from there they had this very intense conversation. I think they ended up swapping numbers. Who knows what happened? Maybe

they'll get in touch one day and invite us to their wedding.'

So, how is the company generating revenue for the projects? Well, the business model is simple but effective. Funding is generated from major city and international firms keen to support corporate responsibility. They provide finance and resources in exchange for their names being associated with the charitable work. In that way, PepsiCo, for example, donated 80,000 bottles for the Water For Workers scheme.

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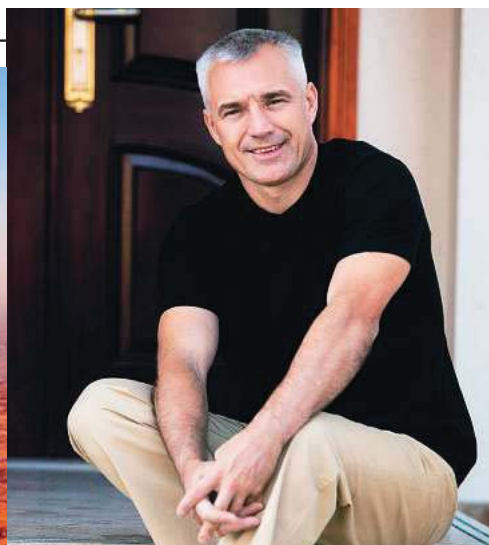


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Peter prefers balloons to aircraft as everyone gets a window seat and can enjoy a 360-degree view

THE BALLOON PILOT

Peter Kollar of Balloon Adventures Emirates on skimming sand dunes, hovering over oryx and the return of airships...

How do you become a balloon pilot?

You learn, just like you would learn to fly a helicopter or an aeroplane, by going to flying school and taking exams. Most of the hot air balloon exams – apart from the actual flying – are similar to those for fixed-wing craft, covering meteorology, navigation, aviation law and so on.

How long does it take?

If you put your mind to it you could get a licence in most countries within six months – it depends how much effort you put in and how much money you have, because flying is expensive. Of course, getting your licence doesn't mean you can fly passengers; you first get your private pilot's licence, then you can upgrade to a commercial pilot's licence at a later stage. It's the same as aircraft – you start on a Cessna and progress to an Airbus. What we fly here in Dubai is the A380 of balloons and the largest class there is; it can lift a basket holding 27 people.

How did you get into it?

I started a balloon company in New Zealand in 1991 and, a year in, one of the pilots said that unless I got my own licence, I could never really develop the company. I got my licence within a year, then upgraded to a commercial licence around 1992. Later, in 2015, I moved to Dubai.

What does a big balloon cost?

It's about €120,000 (Dh478,000), and the envelope – that is, the balloon part of it – depreciates at a rapid rate here due to

heat and ultraviolet rays. Conditions are so harsh here, you can fly them for only three or four years before they need replacing.

How do you control a balloon? Is it a case of 'let's see where the wind takes us'?

Correct! When you stand on the ground you might assume the wind is at 10 knots and moving north, but once you are up in the air it's more like vectors – it's like multiple arrows, each with their own size and direction. The air above your head is made up of hundreds of different vectors so at different altitudes not only do you go in different directions, but at different speeds. Most days there's a significant amount of steering that can be done by going up and down and looking at the wind.

Do you think the hot air balloon's ill-fated big brother, the Zeppelin airship, or dirigible, was abandoned too quickly?

Dirigibles were a good idea! People only remember the disaster that struck on the Hindenburg's last trip in 1937 when many people died. But, in fact, that very Zeppelin had circumnavigated the world at least twice before that, and it crossed the Atlantic ocean 127 times. It flew 80 passengers in great comfort with a baby grand piano on board. The only problem was that these airships weren't filled with helium because that gas was only readily available in the United States and the Zeppelin was German. If it had been using helium instead of hydrogen then the disaster would never have happened as helium can't burn.

Might they make a come-back?

Yes, I think you will see a bit of a revival of dirigibles. Who knows, they may one day come back in a big way.

Given their poor speed and relative difficulty of steering, why are hot air balloons still so popular?

A balloon is cheaper to operate than other aircraft, it flies silently without vibrations and it can fly very accurately a metre above the ground, which is almost impossible in a fixed-wing aircraft. The balloon is like a magic carpet ride – it's an amazing way to see the landscape, especially in Dubai. Everyone in a balloon has a window seat and I can even rotate the basket for a 360-degree view.

How much of a pain is packing it away?

None at all, because we have got a number of very healthy and motivated staff who pack it away for us! In Italy and Hungary where I run flights when it's too hot in the UAE, the passengers help put the balloon away, but in Dubai it's sandy and they'd probably rather not get dusty all over.

You mentioned flying over the Dubai dunes – what else is great about flying here?

We take off next to the Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve and see oryx and gazelles in their natural habitat. The really fun part of balloon flying is actually cruising just over the sand dunes – it's called contour flying and if the weather's good you can come to within half a metre and can almost touch the top of the sand dunes.

What unusual requests have you had?

We got together with Skydive Dubai a year ago when we set a world record by dropping 40 parachutists from a balloon.

Finally, where and what in the world would you love to fly over?

Well, I've flown over the Southern Alps in New Zealand; Lake Constance between Germany and Switzerland; and I've taken a balloon down the Loire Valley where the chateaux are in France. But I would love to fly over Rome. I love architecture and history and, as I speak Italian and live there for some of the year, I'd love to do that. I did do a couple of flights here in Dubai that were allowed under special circumstances and they were hard to beat – one was from the Atlantis The Palm over the Marina and I landed at The Address Montgomery golf course next to the club house, putting the balloon down on the practice green.



EXCESSIVE PERSPIRATION? NO SWEAT

Most of us have been feeling the heat over the past few weeks and that will have meant perspiring more too – but what can you do if your sweating becomes excessive? By Kate Whiting

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While damp underarms and dripping brows can be embarrassing and uncomfortable, for some people excessive perspiration can be a problem all year round, and the medical term for this is hyperhidrosis.

Normally, we can sweat up to one litre a day, but for excessive sweaters the body's cooling mechanism goes into overdrive and can produce as much as four or five times what is needed to regulate temperature.

Armpits are the prime suspects, but the soles of the feet, face and palms are also areas with a high concentration of sweat glands, causing wet patches on clothes, clammy hands and smelly feet.

Hyperhidrosis affects around one in every 100 men and women and normally starts between the ages of 14-25 years. It can run in families, with a third of sufferers having a family member with the condition.

Dr Auldrice Ratajczak, Nuffield Health's deputy medical director for wellbeing, in the UK, says, 'Primary hyperhidrosis is the name given to regular excess sweating for over six months that doesn't have a clear underlying cause. "Normal" sweating can be caused by other conditions, like menopause, cancer, tuberculosis, bacterial infections, some medication, hormonal and neurological conditions, as well as a fever.'

Dr Sonia Gupte, general practitioner at iCare Clinic, Dubai adds, 'With primary hyperhidrosis the sweating is restricted to specific parts of the body such as the palms, armpits or soles as opposed to sweating all over.' The main problem with hyperhidrosis, she explains, is that because there is no serious underlying medical condition, that means there isn't a definite cure or treatment plan. 'Sufferers have





Being overweight, eating spicy food and smoking can trigger overactivity of an individual's sweat glands

hyperactive sweat glands and the way to go is addressing the hyperactivity of those sweat glands and helping patients manage symptoms such as body odour and clamminess.'

CONFIDENCE AND QUALITY OF LIFE

While many doctors have seen their fair share of people with the condition, TV show *Embarrassing Bodies*'

will simply keep their suit jackets on all day to avoid revealing sweat patches on their shirts.'

Wearing cotton clothing is often a source of comfort to sufferers, says Dr Gupte. 'Stay away from synthetics as much as possible and stick to natural fibres that let the body breathe and reduce sweating,' she says.

On dates, special occasions or when giving presentations, perspiration can prove the most nerve-racking component of any activity. It can impact confidence in relationships too, and even lead to depression.

'I have seen patients who have become increasingly anxious because of their symptoms, which only makes matters worse, often resulting in even more sweating. Some sufferers become so self-conscious that they experience a downward spiral and become clinically depressed.'

SEEKING SUPPORT

'Seek help, don't suffer in silence,' advises Dr McKenna. 'Stop focusing on banishing smells and focus on banishing sweat, with a high-strength antiperspirant containing aluminium chloride. Opt for something that is long-lasting and promises to protect you for hours, and ensure it's not only effective in terms of stopping sweat, but that it is also kind to your skin.'

Dr Ratajczak adds: 'Reduce stimulants such as caffeine and

SIX SIGNS YOU'RE EXPERIENCING HYPERHIDROSIS

We've all woken up on a summer's night feeling hot and sticky, but Dr Auldrich Ratajczak says the problem can be so severe that it can cause 'serious social, emotional and professional consequences'. If any of the following are happening to you, it's best to go and see a doctor as you may have hyperhidrosis:

- 1 You avoid physical contact, such as shaking hands, because you feel self-conscious about your sweating.
- 2 You don't take part in activities, such as dancing or exercise, for fear they will make your sweating worse.
- 3 Excessive sweating is interfering with your job – you may have difficulty holding tools or using a computer keyboard.
- 4 You're having problems with daily activities, such as driving.
- 5 You're spending a significant amount of time coping with sweating – for example, frequently showering and changing your clothes.
- 6 You have become socially withdrawn and self-conscious, often turning down invitations to go out.

'I've seen PATIENTS become increasingly ANXIOUS because of their symptoms, which makes matters worse, resulting in more SWEATING. Some are so SELF-CONSCIOUS they become clinically DEPRESSED'

Dr Pixie McKenna says many sit at home and suffer in silence. 'The fear and embarrassment of being "discovered" can often be very stressful and cause sufferers to adopt corrective behaviours,' she says.

'Everyday life can be severely impacted, with avoidance of wearing certain types of clothing, the need to apply antiperspirant several times a day, repeated body washing and also the worry about whether wetness or odour is obvious to others.'

She adds that sweating can affect people from the moment they wake up, particularly during the summer. 'Clothing choices are a particular issue, sleeves are the order of the day for female sufferers, whereas many males

tobacco, and wear loose-fitting clothes in natural fibres. Losing weight reduces the amount of sweat too [if you are overweight to begin with].'

Food can trigger the condition too. 'Spicy food can stimulate overactivity in sweat glands,' Dr Gupte explains. 'That combined with the high temperatures we experience in the UAE is a recipe for excessive sweating.'

Seeing your GP is advisable – especially if you are experiencing other symptoms as well. 'If you feel unwell and have most of your sweating episodes at night, try to speak to your GP early on,' says Dr Ratajczak. 'For other cases, it is reasonable to start with lifestyle changes, and try a higher dose

aluminium antiperspirant from the chemist if your skin tolerates it. If it fails, seek further advice from your GP.'

In some cases, Botox can be an effective temporary measure. 'Botox has been used to treat the condition long before it became an aesthetic enhancer,' says Dr Gupte. A single injection can control hyperhidrosis without blocking the glands and lasts for as long as three to six months.

'Botox calms the nervous system, thus controlling the back-to-back signals it sends to our sweat glands to produce more sweat. This in turn reduces the overactivity of the glands – the root cause of hyperhidrosis.'

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A NOVEL ROMANCE

She was a fresher and he was her 50-year-old lecturer, but rather than being a scandalous affair, Danuta Reah's romance led to happiness and a career as a bestselling author

W

Whenever I tell people how I met my husband, I can always see just a touch of scandal in their eyes.

I want to stress that it wasn't like that at all. Perhaps what happened to us wouldn't happen today – and maybe that's not such a bad thing. I've heard of a few other relationships that started like ours, and they've always ended terribly, with one side hating the other or feeling betrayed.

But with me and Ken? Well, the proof is right there. It's been 35 years since we met and fell in love, and we're still together now, happily married, very much in our element when we're in each other's company.

Ken was my tutor at university. When we first got together I was in my first year and

he was a course leader who had just turned 50. Of course that raised a lot of eyebrows. Some people said really rather rude things about us – that he was taking advantage of my youth or I was just looking for an easy ride through my degree – but even then we were very serious about each other.

These days, I'm a bestselling crime author – my books include the novels *Only Darkness* and *Not Safe* – and a publisher once said to me that the difference between a scandalous affair and a true romance is a long and happy marriage. Well, we're definitely the latter.

In my childhood I spent a lot of time at school messing around. I hated it and left as soon as possible. I spent a lot of time working in offices, married young, had a son, and then divorced. I had to make ends meet and I spent my time doing dead-end jobs, working as a dogsbody in a laboratory or doing general admin work in an office.

But all along I had a nagging belief, deep inside, that I had the potential to achieve something more in life, and so eventually I looked at improving my education.

I found out the University of Sheffield, in the city where I grew up in northern England, ran a mature matriculation course so I took it, and it was amazing. I loved it.

departmental party where staff and students could meet for the first time. These days, you know everyone before you start because everyone is on Facebook and social media, but in those days there was nothing like that so parties were thrown.

They used to get quite wild too – I remember this one certainly was – and, as the evening went on, I found myself talking to a chap who was there. Perhaps we were flirting because later that evening, his wife – who he hadn't mentioned – came over and gave me a dressing down. I was so embarrassed but, as that was happening, I can still remember a second older, very handsome guy stood looking on, clearly quite amused by the whole situation.

I didn't have time to meet him properly, though. I went home sharpish, thinking I'd somehow managed to blot my copybook before the term had even got into full swing.

So imagine my surprise when I went into my first tutorial a couple of days later and saw that same handsome guy standing at the front of the classroom. His name was Ken and he was my linguistics tutor.

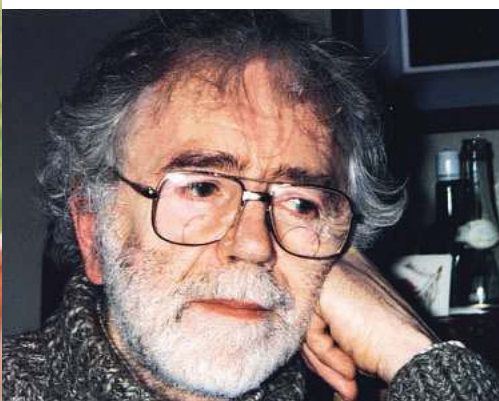
As soon as I recognised him, I tried to slink into a seat at the back, behind everyone else, but he pointed to one in the front. 'Why don't you come and join the rest of the

'A publisher once said to me that the real DIFFERENCE between a SCANDALOUS affair and a true romance is a LONG and HAPPY marriage. We are definitely the latter - we've been together 35 years'



I realised how much I liked to learn and so, at 30 in 1980, I signed up to do an English Literature degree. I was determined to make something of my life – but I'd have laughed if you'd told me I was signing up to meet the love of my life too.

I first became aware of Ken before term even properly started. There was a



Ken intrigued me – I decided he was the sort of person who'd never judge anyone, as long as they were interesting. I found that very appealing

class?' he said. It was excruciating. But there was something about the way he said it that intrigued me endlessly. And that intrigue only grew over the next couple of weeks.

Ken seemed somehow both disinterested in the petty goings-on of campus, and amused by them, too. He gave the impression of being above it all. I came to the conclusion that this was someone who wouldn't dream of judging anyone – be that on their age, their background or their behaviour at a daft party – as long as they were interesting. I found that very appealing.

On a couple of occasions, I found myself thinking about him when I wasn't in class but tried to shake it off. What was the point? He was a lot older than me.

Our first conversation was probably something to do with *The Dream of the Rood*, one of the oldest poems in the English language whose author is unknown. That's what we were studying that term so I imagine we discussed it in class. We

often debated literature and linguistics together. We were both basically word nerds. I think he saw that I was more passionate about the subject than most students and that interested him.

Quite often, after tutorials finished, he would say he was going for a drink with other staff and we were all welcome to join them. A few of us would go along and it slowly became a regular thing. It was nice, very bohemian, and I would find myself sitting next to Ken a lot.

He was older than everyone else there by quite some way – most of the other staff were in their 30s – and his distance was very attractive. He wasn't interested in trying to impress anyone.

We'd talk about linguistics a lot but slowly our conversation evolved – our pasts, music, politics. It was during one of these times that I mentioned one of my windows at home had blown in. I was living in a real wreck of a house at the time. I'd saved enough money to get a mortgage but there was nothing to repair the place. One night there was a terrible gale and, as I was lying in bed, I heard a dreadful crash. I thought the chimney had come through the roof but it was just a window that had blown in.

As soon as I mentioned it, Ken offered to come and take a look. He came round and we were both looking out of the narrow dormer window when we kissed. It just happened. I'd wanted it for some time but even so, it still felt surprising. And lovely. It was like a barrier was coming down. I think he had some qualms afterwards because of



With Ken by my side I managed to get my first book published, and I've never looked back. I've never stopped learning from him



It went on for the THREE YEARS I was at university and then, after I graduated, he PROPOSED. There's NOT been a DAY SINCE that I've REGRETTED what happened. It's a cliché but he's my BEST FRIEND

our professional relationship but I suppose I could be persuasive when I wanted to be.

We decided not to keep it secret. To have done so would have been to suggest we felt we were doing something wrong. And we didn't.

But at the same time we were never going to shout about it from the rooftops either. I knew his colleagues and my fellow students wouldn't exactly approve. I know for a fact a few thought he was helping me unfairly with work – which never happened.

Today, maybe someone would say it wasn't appropriate but to us, back then, it was very natural. In any case, I started taking as few of his courses as possible. Ken was into modern linguistics so I became a

medievalist. I was doing it on my own and I wasn't having anyone saying different. In fact, when our paths did cross in class, we stayed very much in the tutor and student roles. I don't think anyone would have guessed we were in a relationship.

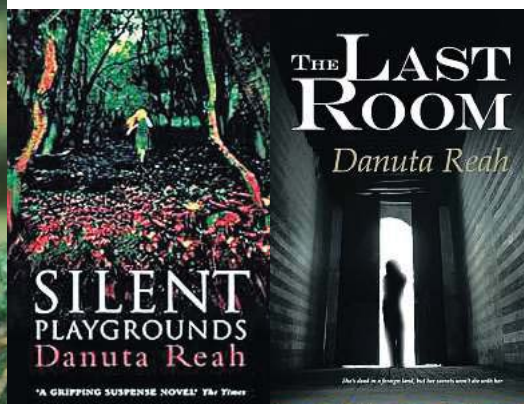
Out of university, it was a different matter, though. We would spend evenings at mine. I didn't have much furniture at the time and the lights sometimes didn't work but we used to sit on cushions with candles dotted about. We'd listen to Cleo Laine, and talk literature. It was very romantic. Sometimes my son would get out of bed to join us and Ken was great with him.

It carried on for the three years I was at university, and then, not long after I graduated, he proposed. It was in a park close to my house that we used to love to

That was published in 1999 and was called *Only Darkness*, the rights to which have been purchased by Escazal Films. Since then my novels have been published in the US, Germany, Holland, France, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Italy, Spain, Finland and Czech Republic – and with every new country Ken is as happy as me.

He was my university tutor for three years, but I've never stopped learning from him since.

📖 Danuta Reah, who also writes under the name Carla Banks, is the author of seven crime novels, a novella, and several short stories. Her latest book, *The Last Room*, is published by Caffeine Nights and is available on Amazon now.



walk around. He just said that he thought we should get married, and I said it was a wonderful idea. It was a simple ceremony at the city's registry office. But it was beautiful because it was Ken, and I knew it was for life.

There's not been a day since that I've regretted what happened. It's a cliché, but he's my best friend. He's more than that, too. It was because of his help and advice that I managed to get my first book published, and have gone on to make a living as an author.

Telling stories was an important part of my childhood, and I don't think I ever lost my love for that but it was only after my degree, when I was telling Ken about it, that he suggested I write a crime novel.

My first novel was based on a rather creepy encounter I had on an empty station platform one evening, which I often tell at author events and I won't repeat now for fear of spoiling the story and the book. But I was telling Ken about it the same evening and he said I should make it into a novel.



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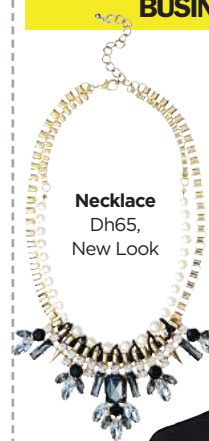
When payday comes blow the budget with one statement purchase – here's how to get your money's worth!



Splurge on
Sophia Webster sandals
Dh2,754



**WEDNESDAY:
BUSINESS MEETING**



Necklace
Dh65,
New Look



Jacket Dh450, Topshop
at Namshi.com

Dress Dh149,
River Island



Bag Dh249,
Pedro



3 WEARS A WEEK

= 156

WEARS PER YEAR

**= DH 18
PER WEAR**

**SUNDAY:
AFTERNOON TEA**



Necklace
Dh59, Koton



Dress Dh299,
River Island

Ring Dh45,
Namshi.com



Clutch
Dh299, Dune

**TUESDAY:
DINNER DATE**



Earrings
Dh50, Aldo
Accessories



Top Dh95,
Zara



Bracelet Dh39,
New Look



Bag Dh199,
River Island



Sizzling summer style

Still holiday shopping? Look out for these hot trends – in stores now!



Blouse Dh1,520,
Vivetta at S*uce



Necklace Dh3,249,
Shourouk at S*uce



Skirt Dh2,495, OTT at S*uce



Culottes Dh299,
River Island



Shorts Dh149, River Island

FAVOURING FLORALS



MICHAEL KORS



Clutch Dh100, Iconic



Boots Dh479, Steve Madden



Dress Dh1,100, Coast



MICHAEL KORS



Dress Dh429, Liu Jo



MARNI

Dress Dh1,350,
BCBG Max Azria



Kitten heels
Dh1,550,
LK Bennett



Dress Dh329, Marks and Spencer



Skirt Dh10,400, Stella Jean at
Harvey Nichols



Dress Dh800,
Patrizia Pepe

POWER PRINTS



Dress Dh130, Iconic



Dress Dh200, Iconic



Dress Dh2,600,
MSGM at Harvey Nichols



Dress Dh249, H&M



Shorts Dh655,
Paul & Joe Sister at Sivvi.com



Jacket Dh7,740, Dries Van
Noten at Bloomingdale's



Dress Dh650, Bebe

Skirt Dh505, Phase Eight at Debenhams



Heels Dh340, Aldo



Swimsuit Dh170, Marks and Spencer



Skirt Dh130, Stradivarius



Kitten heels Dh380, Aldo



FAB FIFTIES HOUSEWIFE

Top Dh545, Kate Spade NY



Skirt Dh4,400, MSGN at Bloomingdale's

Swimsuit Dh1,545, Lisa Marie Fernandez at Net-A-Porter



Dress Dh425, Topshop

Dress Dh440, Armani Exchange



Swimsuit Dh99, F&F



OSCAR DE LA RENTA





Sunglasses Dh85,
Aéropastale



Dress Dh249, Scotch and Soda



Scarf Dh1,285, Salvatore Ferragamo



Kaftan Dh1,849 Lazul
at Bloomingdale's



Playsuit Dh309, Oliver Bonas
at www.oliverbonas.com



Swimsuit Dh70, Splash

CLUB TROPICANA



Dress Dh119, F&F



T-shirt Dh375, Next



Heels Dh380, Aldo



Top Dh129, Koton

Dress Dh650, Bebe



Necklace Dh350, Zahart



Dress Dh1,200, Billabong



Dress Dh661, Carla's Closet



Backpack
Dh199, Asos

HAUTE HIPPIE



Top Dh275, Oysho



Kaftan Dh199, Marks and Spencer



Bag Dh199, Call It Spring



ETRO



Kaftan Dh1,080, BCBG Max Azria



ETRO



TRUSSARDI AND PREEN



Dress Dh99, F&F



Bikini Dh1,099, Heidi Klein at Bloomingdale's



Top Dh69, F&F

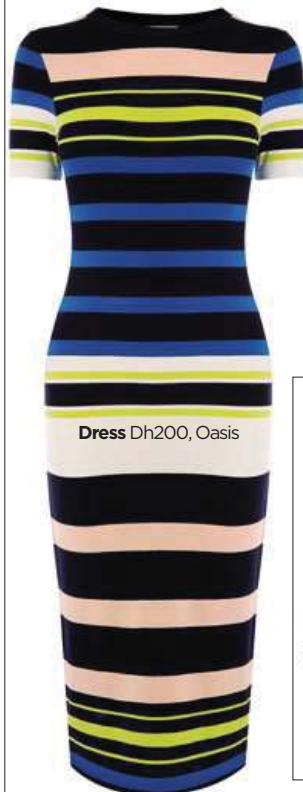


Skirt Dh499, Marks and Spencer



Skirt Dh145, Next

NICELY NAUTICAL



Dress Dh200, Oasis



Wedges Dh155, Shoe Mart



Shorts Dh179, Mango



Skirt Dh150, Iconic



Top Dh155, Mango






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1 AQ LASH SERUM, DH598, AESTHETICA CLINIC

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2

CLARINS INSTANT LIGHT LIP BALM PERFECTOR IN ORANGE, DH96, CLARINS

Master the tangerine pout with 3D radiance pigments that create a lush gloss, while shea butter, vitamin E, wild mango and natural peptides create a bee-stung effect for four hours.



5 STENDERS ANTI-CELLULITE MASSAGE OIL, DH249, GALLERIA MALL

Smooth away cellulite with this Latvian skincare range's concoction of almond, grape-seed and peppermint essential oils. It increases blood circulation for firmer skin you'll love to flaunt.



METALLIC PRECISION LIQUID EYELINER, DH65, MIKYAJY

Give your trusted black eyeliner a rest and go for some dazzling metallic blue. A single sweep of the long-wearing formula gives your peepers instant twinkle, day to night.



3

PHILIP KINGSLEY GERANIUM & NEROLI ELASTICIZER, DH210, HARVEY NICHOLS

A product created especially for Audrey Hepburn in 1974, this revolutionary pre-shampoo product is packed full of cuticle-repairing elasticin and conditioning veggie oils. Leave on damp hair for 20 minutes before washing out for a bouncy glossy new do.



4

VICHY PURETÉ THERMALE HYDRATING AND CLEANSING FOAMING CREAM, DH95, BOOTS

Enriched with cleansing citric acid and anti-pollutant moringa extracts, this rich cream-turned-foam gently draws out impurities while giving your face a huge glug of moisture.



6

AVÈNE COUVRANCE CONCEALER STICK IN GREEN (SPF30), DH235, BOOTS

Sweep on this hypoallergenic pastel green concealer to camouflage angry red undertones and give a smooth finish. It comes in green, yellow or coral shades to tackle different skin imperfections.



GOJI PERFECT FACE CREAM, DH149, BOTTEGA VERDE OUTLETS

With the ultimate anti-ageing trinity of hydrating hyaluronic acid, cell-renewing pro-retinol and antioxidant rich goji berry, this feels like a velvety blanket that brightens your skin.



7

BRAUN SILK-ÉPIL 9 EPILATOR, DH749, EMAX

This nifty little wet and dry epilator already has Jessica Alba's vote and ours too. Its MicroGrip Tweezers capture 4x shorter hair than waxing, and unlike razors the curved shape gives closer cut-free skin contact, while the vibrating massage system reduces the pain of being silky soft and smooth.



8

GIVENCHY ANGE OU ÉTRANGE LE PARFUM (75ML) + ACCORD ILLICITE (4ML), DH555, AREEJ

Meet the Jekyll and Hyde of fragrances. The perfume alone is an elegant blend of jasmine, amber and patchouli. But layered with the vanilla and white leather-infused Accord, it transforms into a wild, decadent scent.



9

10



Les Délices de Nina by Nina Ricci Dh355, Sephora

Carolina Herrera Burning Rose Dh990, Harvey Nichols

Lancôme Maison L'autre Oud Dh530, Debenhams

Tom Ford Velvet Orchid Dh680, Paris Gallery

Estée Lauder Modern Muse Chic Dh554, Paris Gallery

Valentino Valentina Pink Dh485, Bloomingdale's

Comme des Garçons Amazingreen Dh410, Paris Gallery

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Sisley Eau de Sisley Dh615, Paris Gallery



Chanel Chance Eau de Tendre Dh680, Bloomingdale's



Gucci Bamboo Dh535, Harvey Nichols



Clinique Beyond Rose Dh489, Paris Gallery

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BEAUTY'S BIG HITTERS

Bye-bye barely-there neutrals. 'Bold' is the beauty term that's trending this summer. So go on, wear your make-up loud and proud says **Fiona Embleton**

M

Make-up should be empowering. Whether it's a slick of red lipstick on an otherwise bare face, heavily kohled eyes, pencilled-in brows or contoured cheekbones, this summer's make-up mood is unapologetically daring – think updated versions of the girls in Robert Palmer's *Addicted to Love* video. It's all about making a bold statement and, in doing so, walking just that little bit taller with each stroke you apply. Strong brows in particular are still having something of a moment thanks to Cara Delevingne, who made fuller boy brows one of the most sought-after looks when she exploded on to the fashion scene in 2009. Now even celebrities such as Keira Knightley and Solange Knowles are opting for bushy brilliance. Whatever the confidence-boosting arsenal you choose for your make-up bag – and there are several – remember to lavish attention on just one key feature. Keep everything else minimal for a chic modern finish. Here's how...

BOLD BROWS

Really great, well-shaped brows are a beauty staple in the Middle East, where women have long known their transformational power to frame the eyes, making them look bigger and brighter. Now it seems the fashion world has finally cottoned on, as strong brows remain a perennial favourite.

'The effects are anti-ageing, too,' says eyebrow expert Shavata Singh, who opened the first brow studio in Harrods in 2004 and now has her own product range. 'Our brows start to thin with age, so a fuller brow will make you look younger.' But it's equally important they look natural – not drawn in – and that the shape suits your face. 'Cara Delevingne's caterpillar brows may be in vogue for younger women but their flat arches can make eyelids appear hooded over the age of 30,' explains Singh. 'What's more flattering is a thicker brow with a defined arch to open up the eye.'

If you're shaping brows, remember they should begin above your tear duct and tail off above the outer corner of your eye. Your arch should line up with the outer side of your iris



– hold a pencil at a vertical angle for guidance before using slanted tweezers such as **Tweezerman's Pointed Tweezers**, Dh95, to grab strays underneath the brow. Always pluck in the direction of hair growth and use two mirrors: a small magnifying mirror to help you see stray hairs, then after every couple of tweezes, take a step back to look at the overall shape in a big mirror. 'Once you know your shape, tend to your brows while the hairs are still short,' says Singh. 'You'll immediately know which hairs to tweeze and it's easier to remove one or two strays daily,



explains Lisa Potter-Dixon, head make-up and trend artist for Benefit Cosmetics. 'So apply your brow pencil in the arch above your pupil first. That's the area that needs the darkest hit of pigment. As you start to tail off your brow, the pencil will have softened down to get a more feathery result.' Finish with a brow mascara such as **L'Oréal Paris Perfection Brow Artist Plumper**, Dh41, teasing the hair upwards at the start of the arch then brushing the rest outward – to set each hair.

Professional brow treatments are also on the rise. While the traditional art of threading

'BOLD BROWS have ANTI-AGEING effects, too. Our brows start to THIN with AGE, so a FULLER BROW makes you look YOUNGER'

than doing a complete overhaul once a week.' Post-shower or bath is the best time as your pores will be open, allowing the hair to ease out with minimum pain. After, place an ice cube on the area to reduce redness.

You can further define the shape as well as fill in sparse hairs using a brow pencil. Always choose a shade that matches your natural brow not your hair colour to get a softer, natural finish. Ashy shades suit blonde brows, while a mahogany pencil won't make darker brows on brunettes and those with black hair look overdone. Try Bobbi Brown's new **Perfectly Defined Long-Wear Brow Pencils**, Dh200 – they come in eight shades, have an angled tip for easy application and a brush at the other end for grooming. Or the two-in-one **YSL Beauty Dessin des Sourcils**, Dh123, which boasts a pencil at one end and a brush at the other to shape and shade on the go.

'Your first strokes with a freshly sharpened brow pencil lay down the most colour,'

is still used in many salons, Sephora stores across Dubai are now offering Benefit Brow Bar treatments using US-style hot waxing to pluck hairs from the root for a clean finish that lasts between four and six weeks.

But if you're looking for a more permanent solution, turn to the new trend for brow transplants taking Dubai by storm. According to Anisa Vrabac, the head of Hair Transplant Department at the Dubai Cosmetic Surgery Clinic, its transplant procedures use minimally invasive technique known as Stem Cell FUE (Follicular Unit Extraction). 'During the procedure, hair grafts are taken from your scalp and implanted within your thinning eyebrows,' explains Vrabac. 'The hair grafts chosen for the procedure usually have a very fine texture and the same curvature of your original brows for a natural result.' The harvested and implanted hairs then grow into permanent hair follicles and eventually more voluminous brows.





CONTOURED CHEEKBONES

Thankfully, old-school contouring with grey face powders has had its day. Now it's all about tricking the eye with skin-mimicking highlighters and creams or powders one shade darker than your skin, à la Kim Kardashian. Together, they create the illusion of a naturally chiselled face and cheekbones so sharp, you could shave Parmesan on them.

'A matte cream melts seamlessly into the skin and looks the most natural,' says Jane Richardson, international make-up artist for Nars. She swears by the brand's **Matte Multiple in Altai**, Dh165, and **Tom Ford's Shade & Illuminate compact**, Dh370. 'Feel along your cheekbone and place the darker shade underneath it. Blend outwards and upwards towards the ears before sweeping down for softness.' If your skin is on the oily side, a contouring powder such as **Maybelline New York's Master Sculpt Contouring Palette**, Dh67, will have more staying power. Flick a fan brush loaded with the darker shade against the underside of your cheekbones, starting near your ear, and either side of your nose, then blend away any sharp edges.

Finish by bringing light to your face with **Revlon PhotoReady Skinlights Face Illuminator**, Dh84. The pearly pink shade is a match for fair skin while the Peach Light flatters darker complexions. Apply down the bridge of the nose, to the tops of cheekbones.



SHOW-STOPPING EYES

A heavy dose of the 70s inspired the beauty looks for this season. But in sharp contrast to the washes of pastel eyeshadow that dominated the catwalks at Vera Wang and Matthew Williamson was Tom Ford's darker than dark kohled eyes. The effect was sophisticated with a rock 'n' roll edge. According to make-up artist Lisa Eldridge, cream textures work best for this type of modern smoky eye – they stay put longer, plus they're less ageing than layering powder shadows into the creases of your eyes.

'Start by running a gel liner – **Bobbi Brown Perfectly Defined Gel Eyeliner in Pitch Black**, Dh140, is good – along the inner rim of your eyes, then draw little dots along both top and lower lashlines,' she says. 'Take a cream shadow, such as **Benefit Creaseless Cream Shadow in Holy Smokes**, Dh100, and, moving your brush in small circles, blend over the lid, smudging out your eyeliner.'

'To find your socket line, look straight ahead, lift your brows up and take the shadow into that crease. Then smooth it over the dots on your lower lashline, taking the brush quite low to create a cloud of colour around your eyes.'

Finish with lashings of black mascara – **Lancôme Hypnôse Mascara**, Dh180, is the best clump-free formula – for long fluttery lashes we all secretly lust after.



PHOTOS BY GETTY/SHUTTERSTOCK

POWERFUL POUT

It was impossible to ignore the sea of punchy red lips on the SS15 catwalks of Burberry Prorsum and Zac Posen. Apart from the long-time associations with glamour, what was more apparent was how a flash of this vivid hue made eyes, teeth and skin look immediately brighter.

Match the correct shade to your skin tone – the fairer your complexion, the cooler and more blue-toned you should go. Try **Tom Ford Cherry Lush Lipstick**, Dh245.

The warmer orangey tones of **Mac's Ruby Woo Lipstick**, Dh104, suit olive skin, while berry reds flatter darker skin types. 'For a statement look and to prevent your lipstick from feathering into the fine lines around the mouth, apply foundation to the edge of your lips first,' says Linda Cantello, international make-up artist for Giorgio Armani Beauty. 'It perfects the shape of the mouth without the harsh contours of a lip pencil.'



ASK THE EXPERTS

Experts in hypnotherapy, Ayurveda, law and fitness offer advice

I DON'T LIKE WHAT I SEE IN THE MIRROR

Q I'm a sixteen-year-old girl and I know this is going to sound strange, but I really don't like myself. I hate the way I look and even though my friends tell me I look fine, every time I glance in the mirror I am disgusted by what I see. I'm not fat and people say I'm not ugly, but that doesn't seem to make any difference about how I feel. I think my nose is too big and my mouth far too thin, and I'm so desperate I'm considering having cosmetic surgery when I'm old enough. What should I do?

A I'm glad you got in touch, because I think this is an issue many young people will identify with. You are certainly not alone in the way you feel and I'd like to say from the start that it is possible to learn to love and value yourself without resorting to such drastic measures as surgery.

As a teenager, you will have gone through and will probably still be going through some pretty amazing physical and emotional changes, and these can feel overwhelming. It's not uncommon for someone your age to look in the mirror and feel insecure about what they see. However, from your question I feel you are battling low self-esteem and this is making you feel negative about yourself.

We now live in an age where images of ourselves abound, with the advent of the 'selfie', and this is enough to make anybody feel insecure about how they look, but perhaps more so if you're young. At your age it's easy for your thoughts to become distorted and you can end up focusing on things that other people just don't see – they're far more focused on you as a person. Giving

too much importance to the way you look perhaps shows you don't feel confident in the way you interact with others and this is what is actually undermining you.

Maybe you are self-conscious in social situations and misinterpret this as feeling anxious about your looks, when in fact you are more likely to be experiencing social anxiety. This may make you feel like everyone is staring at you and judging you. It's not the case, but the feelings you experience are still real to you.

Counteract this by writing down a long list of all of the inner strengths you have and keep this to hand. Try to minimise the time you spend looking in the mirror or taking photos of yourself. Every time negative feelings well up, read your list and reframe how you think by repeating those positive messages.

So instead of trying to change your outside, do some work on how you feel inside. Give yourself time to mature and develop and begin to value what you do have and you will begin to grow that all-important inner confidence that is really what makes you shine.



RUSSELL HEMMINGS is a life coach, and clinical and cognitive behavioural hypnotherapist

I AM SUFFERING FROM LOWER BACK PAIN

Q I have a nagging pain in the small of my back, which sometimes becomes so painful I can hardly walk. Can Ayurveda help?

A A catch in the back might seem to appear out of the blue, but the underlying problem has probably existed for years.

One of the common causes of backache is poor posture. A balanced posture decreases stress on your back by keeping the muscles, bones and other supporting parts in their natural position. Any change to the normal spinal curve can stress or pull muscles. This

leads to increased muscle contraction, which causes pain. Other major factors that could cause back pain are sprain or strain of muscles or ligaments in the area, and a lack of exercise or incorrect exercise. Being overweight can also cause lower back pain.

Ayurveda defines Kateegraham/Prishtasoola or lower back pain as an indication of vata aggravation. Treatment in Ayurveda is prescribed in accordance with dosha predominance and underlying causes, and is normally a combination of internal as well as external, ranging between one and six weeks or even more in some cases, depending on the underlying cause.



ASHA JONES is an Ayurveda practitioner at Dubai Herbal & Treatment Centre

WHAT ARE THE LAWS RELATED TO ADS?

Q I am the director of a small business in Dubai providing advertising services. I want to ensure I don't break any advertising laws and regulations and would like to know what the law is relating to advertising in Dubai.

A Advertisements are regulated by a number of laws in Dubai, including the Printing and Publication Law (no. 15 of 1980) and National Media Council regulations and laws relating to consumer protection. Ads ought to contain correct information, conveyed credibly, honestly and inoffensively.

In Dubai, particular attention needs to be paid to ensure nothing is represented that offends morality or proper conduct, or is against Islamic culture or beliefs. Nor is it permitted to advertise services or products that are prohibited or restricted under UAE law, such as gambling.

Online advertising is subject to similar rules and to the Cyber Crime Law (no. 5 of 2012).

You need to make sure you don't publish words, images and visual or audio clips that are the intellectual property of a third party without express agreement and/or a formal licence agreement.

Strict penalties can be imposed by the DED Commercial Compliance and Consumer Protection sector and by the National Media Council for violations, as well as orders removing or prohibiting publication of offending advertisements or campaigns and even suspending or withdrawing an offending publisher's/advertiser's trading licence.

All advertising content should be objectively assessed by the advertiser, with regard to the reasonably expected subjective perception and reaction of the target audience for the ad or campaign, and of the general public. Legal advice would be advisable if the advertiser is in any doubt as to the nature and content of a proposed ad or campaign.

It is not permitted to advertise services or products that are PROHIBITED or RESTRICTED under UAE law, such as gambling. ONLINE advertising is subject to similar rules and to the Cyber Crime Law

I HAVE PAUNCH PROBLEMS...

Q I can't seem to get rid of the rolls of fat around my stomach – no amount of sit-ups seems to help. Do you have any tips on how I can lose my stubborn pot belly?

A This, I'm sure, is one question that is high on the minds of a lot of people.

Although sit-ups are great for strengthening your core, many people are under the misconception that blitzing your abs every session is going to give you a washboard stomach. To all of them, I have one thing to say: abs are made in the kitchen, not in the gym. The only way to get flat abs is by following a healthy diet that you maintain throughout the week and by getting your body fat down to around 12 per cent or below. Unless your metabolic rate is very good you are unlikely to achieve great abs if you mess around with your diet.

My advice is to not worry too much about stomach fat if you are eating healthy and exercising regularly. It is always the last place that most people find the fat remaining on their body as it is the hardest to shift. Get your cardio in by working out in a gym, and in time you will see the fat start to melt away. Keep this up and don't get disheartened – if you can pursue it you can achieve it.

Ahmad Jabber
is a personal
trainer and founder
of Elite Aesthetics

STEPHEN FIELD
is a legal consultant at
Sanad International Law
Group (www.silg.ae) in
Dubai and a practising
barrister in London

GOT A PROBLEM?

Our fantastic panel of renowned experts is available to answer all your questions related to law, fashion, well-being, beauty, finance, etiquette and hypnotherapy. Email your queries to friday@gulfnews.com



OATS WITH TOFFEE APPLES

Prep time 10 mins

Cooking time 10 mins

Serves 4

2 tbsp butter

2 tbsp brown sugar

1 tsp honey

2 apples, sliced into thin rings

Oats cooked in milk, to serve

Heat the butter, sugar and honey in a frying pan.

Add the apple slices and **fry** until caramelised.

When ready to serve, spoon a portion of oats into a bowl and **top** with toffee apple slices.



EGGS FLORENTINE

Prep time 5 mins

Cooking time 10 mins

Serves 4

Butter, as required

1 baguette, cut into 8 slices

180g baby spinach

8 eggs, poached

Hollandaise sauce, as desired

Spread butter on both sides of the baguette slices and **toast** in a hot pan until crisp.

Blanch the spinach until wilted and season with some sea salt and freshly ground pepper.

When ready to serve, **place** some spinach on a slice of toasted bread. Top with another slice of toast, more spinach, then a poached egg.

Drizzle some Hollandaise sauce over.

Repeat the process to make other servings.



SALMON WITH RÖSTI

Prep time 15 mins

Cooking time 10 mins

Serves 4

6 medium-size potatoes

Olive oil, a splash

250ml crème fraîche

4 tbsp capers

Smoked salmon, rocket leaves and lime wedges, to serve

Peel and **grate** the potatoes.

Sprinkle with salt and allow to stand for a few minutes.

Squeeze out all the liquid from the potatoes using your hands. Heat the oil in a frying pan and **spoon** in the grated potato in small portions.

Press the potato flat with the back of the spoon so that it forms a cake.

Fry both sides until crisp. Season with pepper.

Mix together the crème fraîche and capers. Serve with the rösti, smoked salmon, rocket and lime wedges.

Bring on **BRUNCH!**

Get friends and family together this holiday weekend and impress them with these tasty treats

PASSION FRUIT AND CASHEW GRANOLA

Prep time 5 mins

Serves 4

4 tbsp honey

100g cashewnut brittle, roughly
chopped

500g granola

500g Greek yogurt

230g passion fruit pulp

Divide the honey between 4 bowls.

Mix the cashewnut brittle with the granola and spoon over the honey. Mix Greek yogurt with passion fruit pulp. Spoon over the granola and **serve**.





BUTTERED EGGS WITH MINT & LEMON

Prep time 15 mins

Cooking time 20 mins

Serves 6

1 loaf Turkish bread, halved horizontally

3½ tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

1 red onion, thinly sliced

½ tsp salt

2 lemons, juice of

150g butter, chopped

6 eggs

350g Greek yogurt

1 clove garlic, crushed

1 tsp ground cumin

½ tsp dried chilli flakes

½ bunch mint, leaves picked, small leaves reserved, large leaves roughly chopped

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Place the bread, cut-side up, on a baking tray. **Drizzle** with 2 tbsp of oil and season with salt and pepper. Bake for 10 minutes or until golden and toasted.

Meanwhile, heat the remaining oil in a large, non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Add the onion and salt and **cook**, stirring occasionally, for 8 minutes or until soft.

Add 2 tsp lemon juice, **stir** to combine, then transfer to a bowl. Wipe the pan clean and set aside.

Line a large tray or work surface with a sheet of greaseproof paper. Heat 15g of butter in the pan over medium heat. **Crack** in 2 eggs and fry for 2 minutes or until the whites are set but the yolks are still runny.

Using a spatula, carefully **transfer** the eggs to the greaseproof paper.

Repeat twice with the butter and remaining eggs.

Place the toasted bread on a large platter, **spoon** over the yogurt, add the onions and put the eggs on top.

Heat the frying pan to medium heat and add the remaining 105g of butter, garlic and cumin, and cook, stirring, for 1 minute or until fragrant.

Add the remaining lemon juice, **season** with salt, then cook for another minute or until sizzling. Drizzle butter mixture over eggs, then **scatter** with chilli flakes and mint. Slice and serve immediately.

PESTO SCRAMBLED EGGS WITH SPINACH & AVOCADO

Prep time 5 mins

Cooking time 15 mins

Serves 2

4 eggs

2 tbsp milk

Olive oil spray

75g baby spinach leaves

1 tbsp basil pesto, plus extra to serve

½ large firm ripe avocado, stone removed, chopped, to serve

2 slices wholegrain toast, to serve

In a bowl, **whisk** together the eggs and milk, then season.

Heat a medium-size frying pan over a medium heat and spray lightly with olive oil. Cook the spinach until just wilted then remove from the pan. Return the pan to a medium heat, **spray** with a little more oil and add the egg mixture.

Using a wooden spoon, **stir** the mixture, bringing it from the edges of the pan to the centre. Continue until the eggs are almost set. Add the pesto and spinach and stir until just combined. **Season** and serve with avocado, toast and an extra dollop of pesto.

RISE AND SHINE!

Breakfast doesn't have to be boring. **Silvena Rowe's** recipes will wake up your taste buds and set you up for the day

PHOTOS AND STYLING BY ANAS THACHARPADIKKAL



ASIAN CRAB OMELETTE

Prep time 5 mins

Cooking time 5 mins

Serves 2

1 long green chilli, halved, seeds removed and finely chopped

1 cup freshly cooked crabmeat

2 tsp grated fresh ginger

6 spring onions, thinly sliced

1 cup snow pea sprouts, trimmed

3 eggs

2 tsp soy sauce

1 tsp fish sauce

oil, for frying

2 tbsp oyster sauce

toasted ciabatta, to serve

Mix half the chilli with most of the crabmeat (**save** a tablespoon for garnishing), ginger and half the spring onion.

Mix the remaining chilli with the sprouts and remaining spring onions. Lightly **beat** the eggs with the soy and fish sauce to combine. Add the chilli, sprouts and spring onions. Brush a large non-stick frying pan with a little oil and place over

medium heat. Once the oil is heated, add the egg mixture and **shake** the pan to distribute, gently stirring with the underside of a fork.

As eggs begins to cook at the edges, use the fork to **draw** cooked egg in towards the centre, allowing the uncooked eggs to run out towards the edge. Continue until cooked. Turn out on to a plate and **scatter** with crab mixture. Roll up and slice in half. Drizzle with oyster sauce and serve with remaining crabmeat and sprout mixture. Serve with toast.

MIDDLE EASTERN BREAKFAST

Prep time 30 mins

Cooking time 10 mins

Serves 4

1 large aubergine, cut lengthwise
into 8 thin slices

1 tbsp olive oil

2 tbsp mint leaves, chopped,
plus extra leaves to garnish

200g fresh low-fat ricotta

4 boiled eggs, halved

6 roma tomatoes, halved

2 small Lebanese cucumbers,

halved lengthways

80g mixed olives

1 tbsp zaatar or sumac

100g reduced-fat feta, crumbled

2 tsp honey

2 tsp extra-virgin olive oil, to drizzle

Preheat a grill pan or barbecue grill to medium-high. Lightly **brush** the aubergine slices with oil on each side.

Grill for 2 minutes each side or until charred. Set aside to cool slightly.

Mix the mint with the ricotta and

season well. When the aubergine is cooled but still soft, **spread** a heaped tablespoon of ricotta mixture at the end of 1 slice and roll up to enclose. Continue with remaining aubergine and ricotta mixture. Set aside.

To serve, divide the aubergine rolls, eggs, tomatoes, cucumber and olives among serving plates. **Sprinkle** the eggs with zaatar or sumac. Crumble over feta and drizzle with honey.

Garnish with extra mint leaves and **drizzle** with extra-virgin olive oil.

PROPS COURTESY OF HOMES RUS





THAT SINKING FEELING...

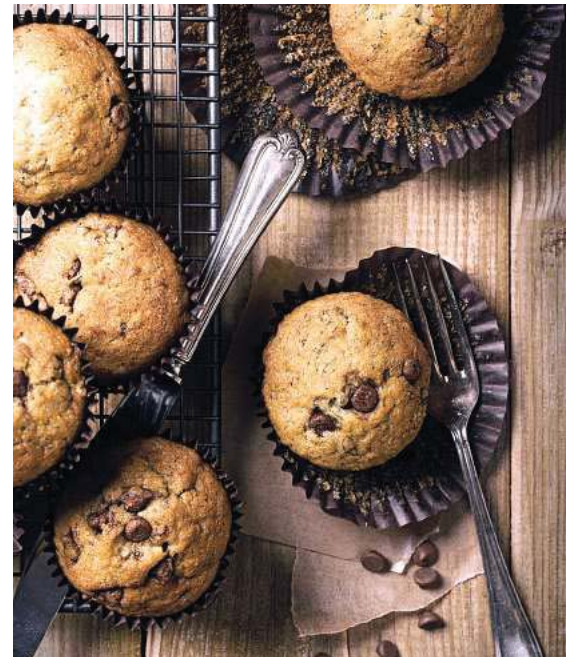
Q When I add chopped nuts or chocolate chips to cake batter, they sink to the bottom while baking. How can I stop this happening?

A This is a very common problem and surprisingly most recipes don't tell you what to do to prevent this from happening.

The simplest solution is to toss the chopped nuts or chocolate chips with 1 tbsp of plain flour before adding them to the batter.

If you are using chopped fruit, then increase the quantity of flour to 2 tablespoons.

Also, ensure the nuts and fruit are finely chopped before you toss them with flour. Big pieces tend to be heavier than the batter, so they're bound to sink while baking. Chocolate chips and raisins, on the other hand, don't have to be chopped.



DOMESTIC DILEMMAS

Friday's very own celebrity chef **Silvena Rowe** is happy to answer all your kitchen queries

Solved

CHEWY CHICKEN

Q Every time I make skinless, boneless chicken in the oven, it comes out dry and chewy. What am I doing wrong?

A Ideally, when baking chicken it should be on the bone as this helps to keep the meat moist. If you have to cook boneless chicken then it's important you do not mix chicken parts – thighs with breasts, for example. The cooking time for each differs, meaning you could end up with some pieces that are dry and chewy, and others that are undercooked.

Here's a basic recipe that will give you the desired results and once you've mastered it, you can experiment with marinades to add more flavour. First,



ensure the chicken is at room temperature. Wash it and pat dry. Next, place it in a bowl and season it well with salt and freshly ground pepper.

Drizzle a generous glug of olive oil all over the chicken and toss so that all the

pieces are evenly coated with oil. If using a marinade, ensure it has some oil in it.

If you're using a marinade, add it at this stage. Preheat the oven to 220°C. Place the chicken pieces in a baking dish – there's no need to grease it – in a single layer and bake for 20 minutes. If you think the chicken is still not cooked, then put it back in the oven for a further 5 minutes.

Once cooked, remove the dish from the oven and cover it with aluminium foil. Let it rest for 10 minutes. This will help the chicken stay moist and tender. Serve with lemon wedges and your favourite dip.

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION FOR SILVENA?

Email her at friday@gulfnews.com, with 'Domestic Diva' in the subject field

CAPRESE SALAD



NICOISE SALAD



CUCUMBER, CHICKPEA AND SALMON SALAD



SEARED CARPACCIO SALAD



NICOISE SALAD



Prep time 15 mins
Serves 4

12 baby potatoes
250g green beans, trimmed
2 tins of tuna, drained
4 hard-boiled eggs, quartered
100g black olives, pitted
10 anchovy fillets
1 onion, thinly sliced into rings
100ml olive oil
2 tbsp lemon juice

Boil the potatoes until tender. Drain, cool and cut into quarters. Plunge the green beans in boiling water for about 5 minutes. **Drain** and refresh in cold water. Drain again. Place all the ingredients except the oil and lemon juice in a bowl and **season** with pepper. **Mix** the oil and lemon juice together to make a dressing and pour over salad. Toss and serve.

CAPRESE SALAD



Prep time 10 mins
Cooking time 5 mins
Serves 4

3 tbsp olive oil
3 tbsp butter
150g sourdough bread, broken into chunks
6 large tomatoes
150g fresh mozzarella, roughly torn
30g basil, torn
12 black olives, pitted

Heat the oil and butter in a large pan. **Add** the bread and fry until golden brown and crisp. **Chop** the tomatoes and place on a serving platter with the mozzarella, croutons, basil and olives. Season and serve.

SEARED CARPACCIO SALAD

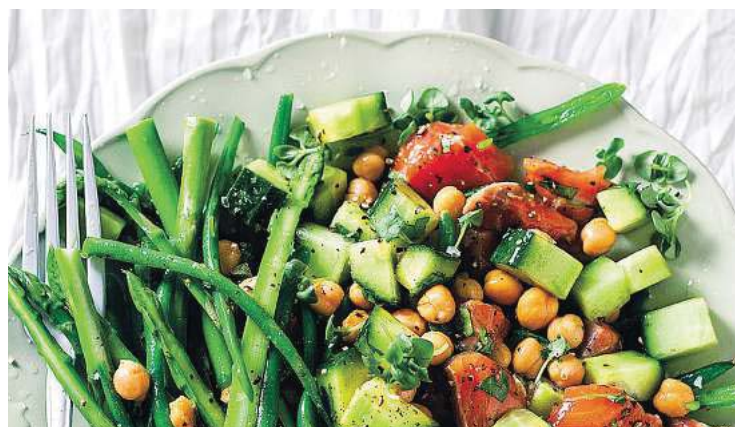


Prep time 10 mins
Cooking time 5 mins
Serves 4

2 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
50ml olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
1 tsp garlic paste
1 lemon, juice of
2 x 650g rump steaks
80g fresh rocket
200g rosa tomatoes, halved
100g pecorino cheese

In a jug, mix together the Worcestershire sauce, olive oil, garlic paste and lemon juice. **Rub** the mixture into the steaks. Heat a griddle pan until smoking hot and **sear** the steaks for about 2 minutes on each side. The centre should still be pink. Remove from the pan, season and allow to **rest** for about 10 minutes before slicing thinly. Arrange rocket and tomatoes on a platter. **Top** with the steak and shavings of pecorino cheese. Drizzle with oil and serve.

CUCUMBER, CHICKPEA AND SALMON SALAD



Prep time 10 mins
Cooking time 5 mins
Serves 6

150g green beans, trimmed
170g asparagus
400g tin chickpeas, drained and rinsed
1 cucumber, diced
350g smoked salmon, diced
4 tbsp soy sauce
120ml olive oil
1 lemon, juice and zest of

Place the green beans and asparagus in a large bowl. **Pour** boiling water over and leave for 5 minutes. Drain and allow to cool. **Add** the chickpeas, cucumber and salmon to the vegetables. In a jug, **whisk** together the rest of the ingredients then pour over the salad. Season well, **toss** and serve.



LET THE NUMBERS DO THE TALKING



OVER A MILLION FANS



OVER A QUARTER MILLION FOLLOWERS

... AND COUNTING!

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GULF NEWS



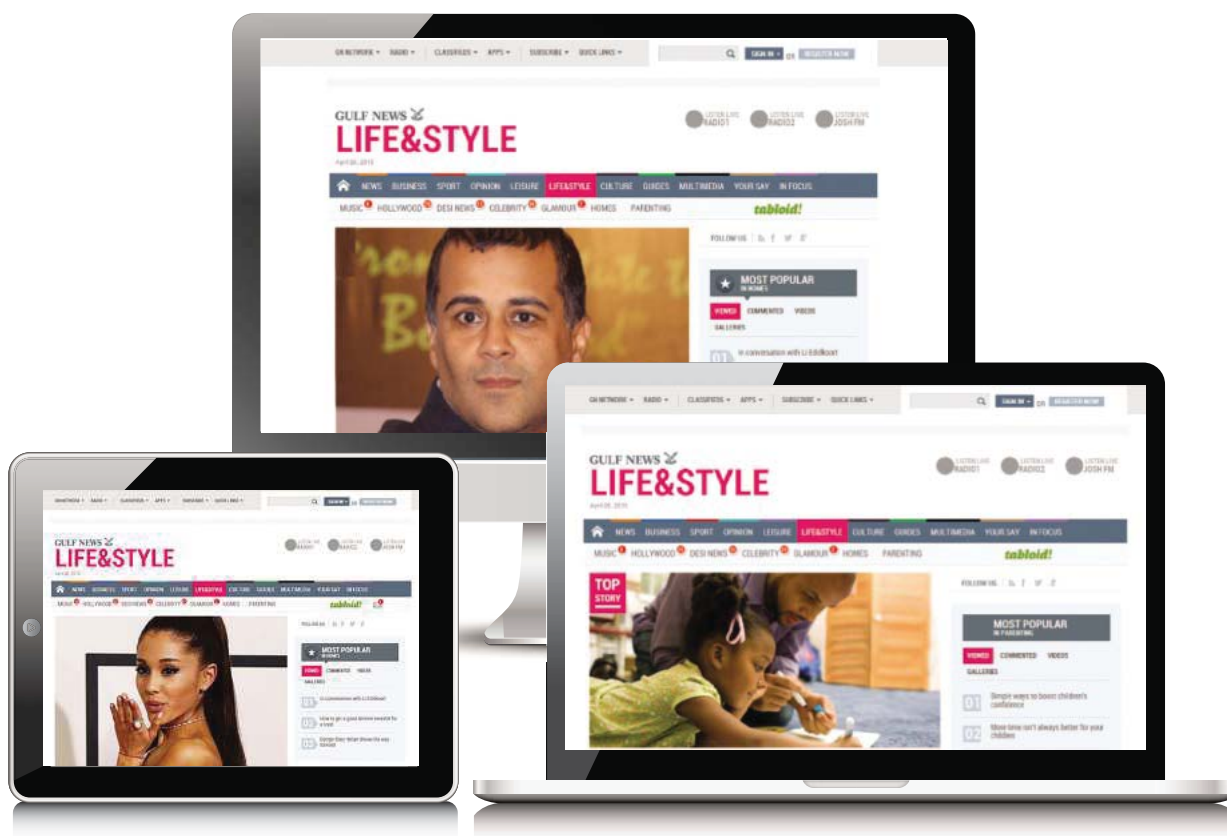
THE INTELLIGENT CHOICE

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EXPLORE

TAJ LAKE PALACE IN UDAIPUR, RAJASTHAN INDIAN

It is said that Rajasthan has more history in one area than the rest of India put together, and considering the innumerable ruins, opulent palaces and majestic forts that rise from the desert dunes of this northern Indian state, it's easy to see why. Much of Rajasthan is covered by the Thar Desert, so the city of Udaipur in the south, known as The Venice of the East, stands out with its myriad canals and lakes. To experience the Lake City's impeccable Rajput hospitality we recommend a stay at the Taj Lake Palace. Situated in the centre of Lake Pichola, this 269-year-old white marble palace-converted-hotel is a visual

treat. The Royal Retreat package includes a two-night stay, breakfast on both days, a traditional Rajasthani thali dinner at Neel Kamal restaurant with views of the Lily Pond (above), 15 per cent off treatments at Jiva Spa and a half-day sightseeing (guide optional) tour of the idyllic spots of Fateh Sagar Lake, the glorious gardens of Gulab Bagh and Saheliyon-ki-Bari. Head a little off track to Sita Mata Wildlife Sanctuary and marvel at the tigers. What better way to end your stay in the Land of Maharajas than meeting the Indian jungle's royalty?

 Package from Dh3,299 per person per night for luxury rooms. Call 0091 294 242 8800.

STYLE ON THE GO

AMP UP

Blast your music loud and proud with the Cayin C5 Headphone Amplifier, which has a noise-cancellation function and an aluminium shell to block interference. Plus it doubles as a charger for all mobiles and iPods! Dh900 at Mmaas Media, JLT.

BOTTLE IT UP!

To prevent leaky luggage nightmares transfer your shampoos, moisturisers and shower gels into these cute aluminium and plastic containers. This neat eight-piece travel bottle kit by Asaklitt costs Dh45 at Clas Ohlson stores.



LUSH IN LIME

Look bright-eyed in these Burberry sunnies. The classic shape and vibrant lime hue sit well with any summer look, from beachside babe to garden party glamour. Dh500, The Luxury Closet.com.



HOME...



RAMADA DOWNTOWN DUBAI

City slickers, forget splurging on tours to Paris or New York and rediscover the city under your nose. Ramada Downtown Dubai's Summer Promotion unlocks one-bedroom city-view suites from Dh550 per night. Overlooking popular Dubai landmarks such as the Burj Khalifa, it includes daily buffet breakfasts, Wi-Fi connection and shuttle service to The Dubai Mall and Burj Khalifa Metro station. Valid until October 10, call 04 330 7330.

...AND AWAY



THE MERRION HOTEL, DUBLIN

Home to literary greats Oscar Wilde and WB Yeats, Ireland's capital is not just a Unesco city of literature but also a rising international shopping hub on par with London and Milan. Enjoy retail delights on Grafton Street and department store Brown Thomas with the Merrion Hotel's 'Shop in Style' package, which includes a two-night stay in a luxurious double room, breakfast, a Dh302 Brown Thomas gift card and shopping delivery service. From Dh2,217 per room per night. 00353 1603 0600.

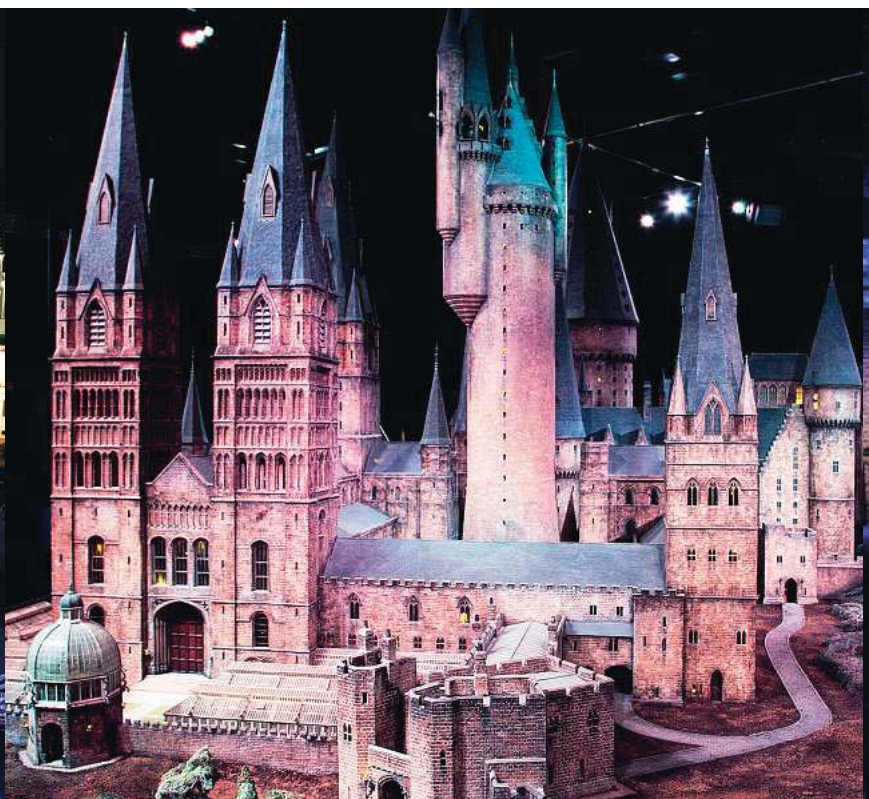
TRAVEL APP OF THE WEEK



WI-FI FINDER

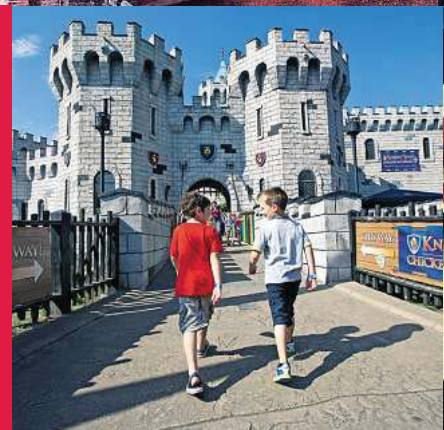
Sick of travelling without Wi-Fi or being cooped up in cafés to stay connected? This clever app scans for Wi-Fi hotspots around you,

provides directions to their locations, details on network providers and works offline too. Free for Android and iPhone.

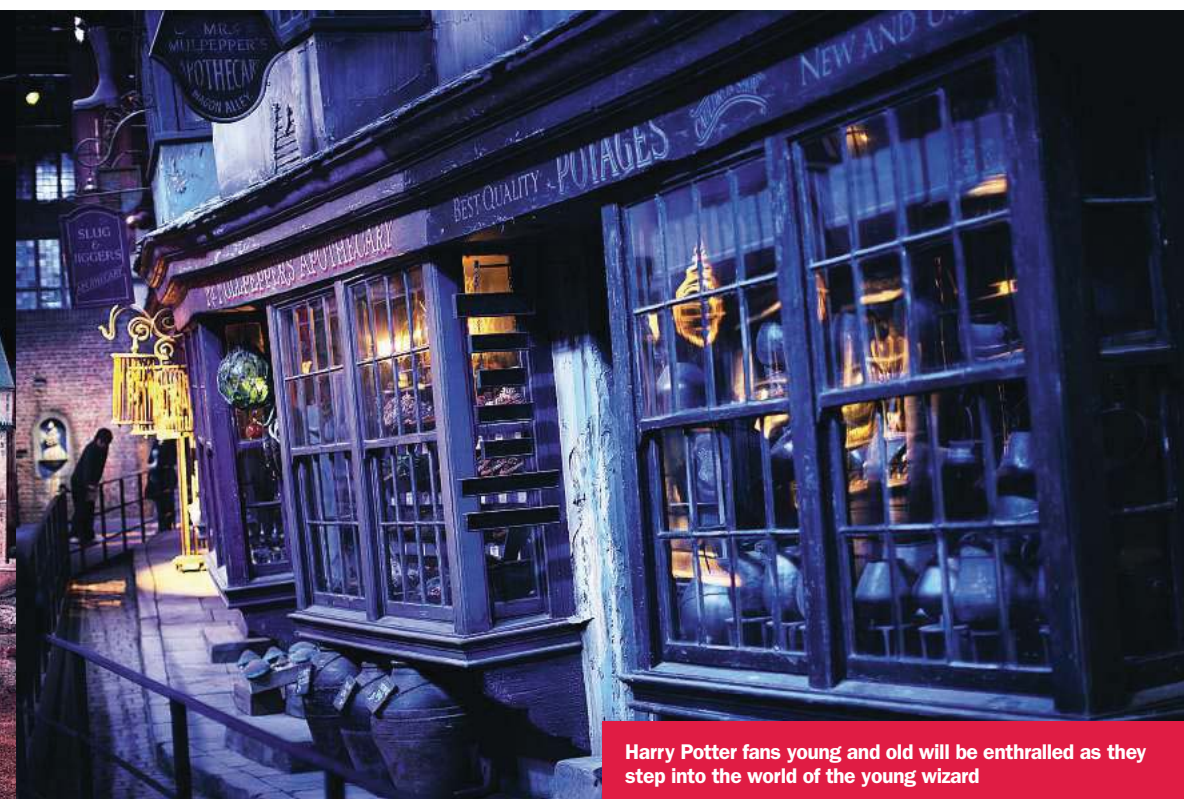


MAGIC BEYOND THE CAPITAL

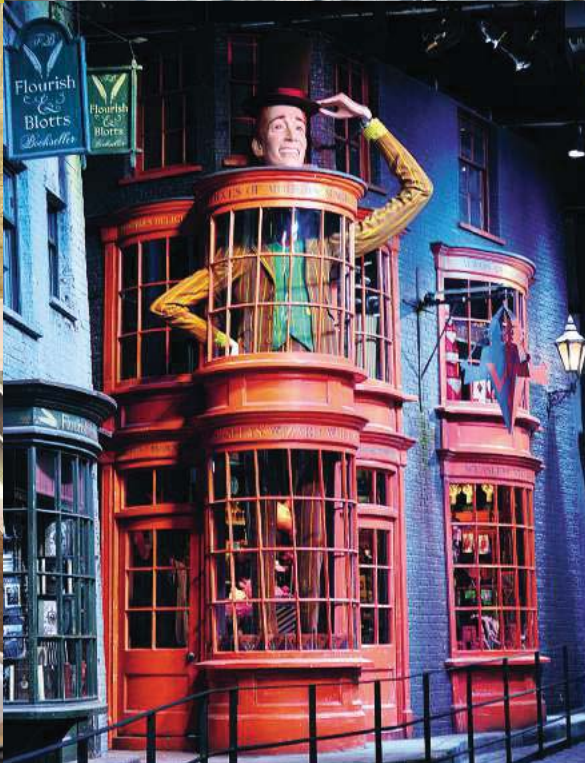
With Harry Potter back in the news – as a London stage play, no less – **Mike Peake** takes his family on a child-friendly, whistle-stop tour of the attractions just outside Britain's most bustling metropolis



After enjoying a magical trip around Harry Potter's world make time for the trip to Legoland, left, in Windsor



Harry Potter fans young and old will be enthralled as they step into the world of the young wizard



T

The two ladies sitting opposite me on the busy 8.20 into London's Charing Cross station share a knowing smile, each having pulled out a copy – quite serendipitously – of JK Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* on the morning commute. The year is 1997 and I, a grown adult, struggle to quell the bile that bubbles in my stomach like one of Professor Snape's malevolent potions.

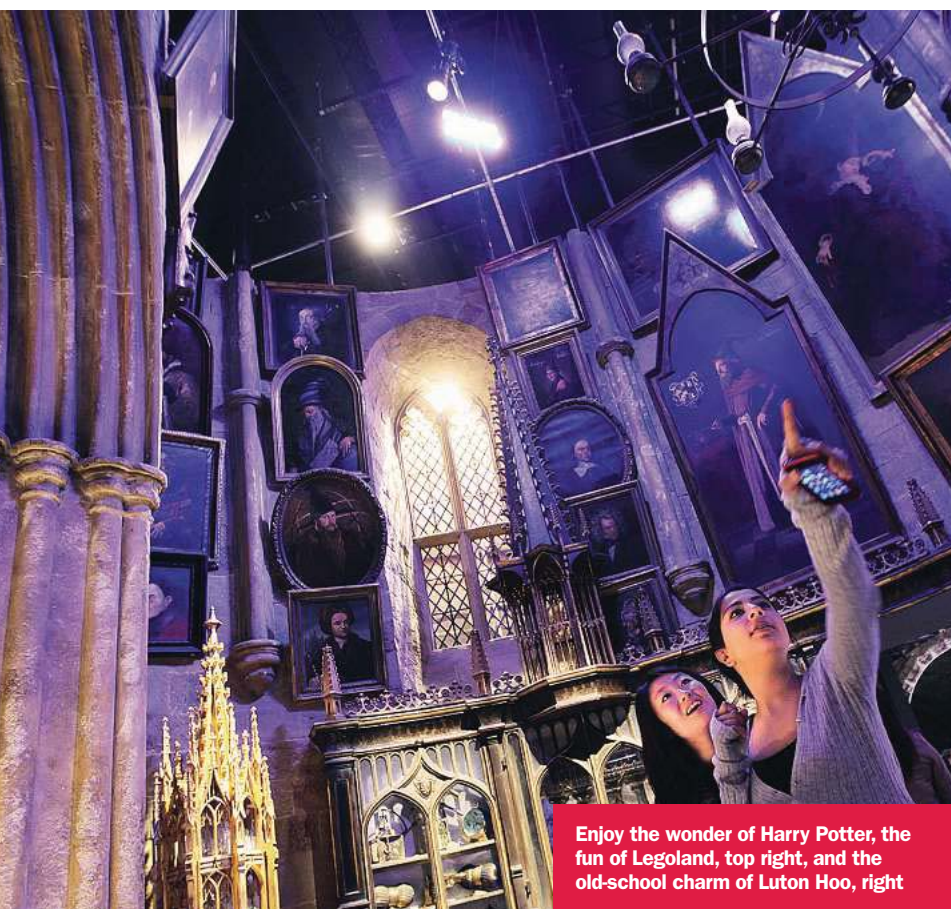
Today, it's with a bit of a wince that I recall how the overnight success of Rowling's zeitgeist-setting novel divided the magazine office at which I used to work, half of us embracing this whimsical tale of the bespectacled boy wizard, the other half (that's me) gleefully dismissing it as a 'silly kid's book'.

It took children of my very own to make me take off the blinkers and actually read that landmark first book – and not a day goes by when I'm not grateful that I did. There are certainly more fervent Harry Potter fans than myself, but when you've read all seven of the books to your wee ones, all things Hogwarts become quite a big part of your life.

Now, on a warm wet day on the edge of London, my wife, our two boys and I are standing open-mouthed inside Professor Dumbledore's actual office. It's the real one, complete with all the portraits and the furniture and the knick-knacks and everything – and there's not a spell in existence that could wipe the joy off our faces.

If only those ladies on the train could see me now...

We have, it has to be said, 'done' London. Having lived there for many years and visited its amazing museums so many times that people were starting to wonder if we were there to steal something, it was inevitable that the novelty would wear off. But living in a city often means that you don't venture



Enjoy the wonder of Harry Potter, the fun of Legoland, top right, and the old-school charm of Luton Hoo, right



Our TOUR starts in a large room where a SHORT, cleverly made FILM PUSHES all the right BUTTONS and has us DABBING our EYES. I'm WELLING UP and there's a woman WEEPING with UNBRIDLED joy

very far out of it – which is exactly why we've returned with a vengeance.

Don't get me wrong: if you've got three days to 'do' London, then take the kids to Madame Tussauds and the Natural History Museum by all means. But we've done all that, and this trip – a sort of homecoming after several years away – had been planned with a different London in mind.

The Warner Bros Studio Tour London – The Making Of Harry Potter, is the first stop on our exploration of the city's perimeter, and it does stretch its capital connections a little, being a full 28km from Piccadilly Circus.

It opened with a fanfare in 2012 and instantly attracted some rather undeserved scorn for the way in which all exit routes went through the gift shop, where you could buy everything from Nimbus 2000 broomsticks to authentic-looking Gryffindor robes. A few grouches also bemoaned the fact that it was

housed in an aircraft hangar in the middle of nowhere, but they were missing the point: this once-in-a-lifetime experience was created in the actual Leavesden movie studios, and is the exact spot where every single one of the Potter films was created.

So this isn't a theme park, and it's not the international travelling Harry Potter exhibition that has been doing the rounds. It's the real deal, it's been an outrageous success, and if they were to start shooting a new Harry Potter film tomorrow, right here is where they'd begin. I can't help but wonder if the props guy on the forthcoming Harry Potter stage play has been round with a clipboard and a hungry look on his face.

Our tour starts in a large room where a short, cleverly made film pushes all the right emotional buttons and has us dabbing at our eyes. I really am welling up, and there's a woman a couple of seats away openly weeping with unbridled joy. The anticipation builds as we're ushered into a kind of anti-chamber that faces

a very large and familiar-looking door, in front of which our guide asks if it's anyone's birthday, hoping, I imagine, for a grinning youngster.

The only hand shooting up, however, is that of a woman in her 20s, who is ushered forward and told to push open the door, which she does with a little too much gusto. The door wobbles a bit and flies back with a rather lightweight thud, the illusion of 500kg of solid oak well and truly shattered. Luckily, it's the only time during the next three hours that the magic of the movies shows even the tiniest of cracks.

Five minutes later, mouth still slightly agape thanks to the fact that the 100 or so people in our group are now standing inside the Hogwarts Great Hall, I'm back in gullible geek mode. Two enormous dining tables line the room, there are real props from the film everywhere and the kids are on the hunt for a golden snitch which, if you've not read the books, is a key bit of kit from the wizarding game of Quidditch. There

are 15 of these winged balls dotted about – all hard to spot – and little ones are encouraged to cross them off in a book they’ve each been given. Touches like this keep kids amused while mum and dad read information plaques and say, ‘Ooh!’ a lot.

From the Great Hall, we wander into a cavernous arena into which full sets from multiple Harry Potter movies have been arranged. There’s the Weasleys’ Burrow, the Gryffindor common room, Harry’s dorm, the aforementioned Dumbledore’s office and several others – all just as they were in the movies. But it’s not just the sets that impress, it’s the props – you’d be hard-pressed to think of an object big or small you saw in any one of the films and not find it here.

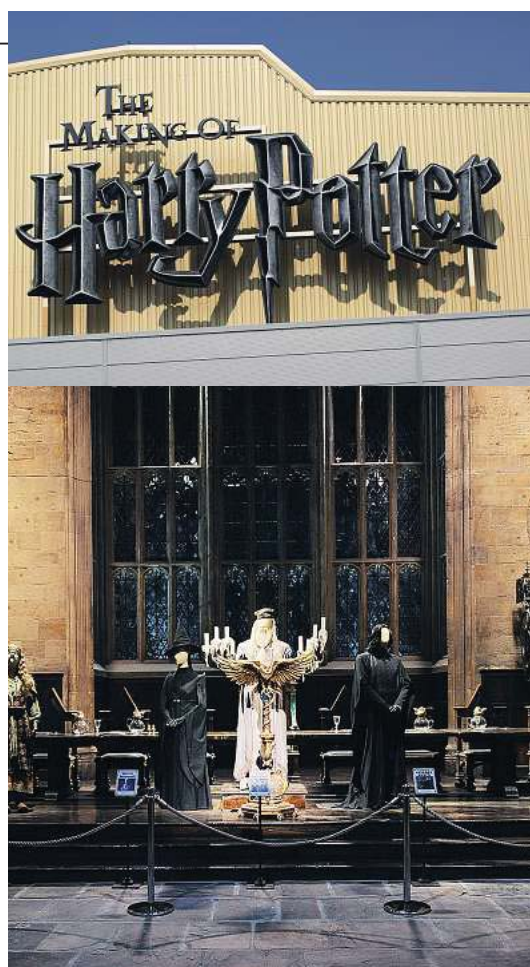
In fact, it’s all pretty overwhelming – and it carries on into an outside courtyard where you can buy a mug of Butterbeer, stand on the back of the three-decker purple Knight Bus and pose with Harry’s beloved owl, Hedwig (the real one!), in Privet Drive.

Incredibly, we’re barely halfway through, but suffice to say that the grand finale, a 1/24-scale model of Hogwarts and its surroundings, is spectacular. Contrary to what the movie screen would have you believe, this is also the only Hogwarts that ever really existed, and people mill around it for ages, awestruck.

What my kids don’t know is that once they’ve raided the gift shop the movie theme continues with a stay at the grand and stately Luton Hoo just a short drive up the road and itself boasting a rich cinematic history.

Two Bond films were shot at this five-star hotel, as were scenes from 1994 smash hit *Four Weddings and a Funeral*. What the kids like most are the former London taxicabs hotel staff use to ferry guests from one part of the 1,000 acre estate to another. We hop into one for a 60-second drive to one of the restaurants, and it’s all the proof we need that we don’t have to be in the heart of the city to feel like we’re ‘doing’ London.

The weather could go either way the next morning, but Legoland Windsor is one of those places where a splash of rain really doesn’t matter. It’s only 40 minutes away down the M25, and



All aboard the Knight Bus for a magical tour around the world of Harry Potter – you can even meet Hedwig and pop in to Privet Drive

our youngest son – quite possibly the biggest Lego fan in existence – can barely contain himself. His big brother has never been much of an enthusiast for the Danish toymakers’ brightly coloured plastic blocks, but he does love a theme park, so all bases are covered.

Legoland Windsor pulls in around two million visitors a year and is one of the top 15 most-visited theme parks in Europe – and, naturally, the whole experience is a Lego-lover’s dream. There are multiple places to stop and play with Lego or see it stuck together into all manner of jaw-dropping formations – Miniland, with its Eiffel Tower, London skyline and Kennedy Space Centre, is easily good for an hour or more – but the theme-park angle also means roller coasters, log-flumes and the like.

We inadvertently create our own temporary attraction when the kids pop a Mentos sweet into a can of Coke and a surprisingly large, frothy fountain ensues; hurriedly leaving the scene of the crime, we’re soon laughing about it – and the rain does come in a predictable burst to wash it all away.

Legoland Windsor is huge, made up of 11 themed ‘lands’ spread over 150 acres of parkland, and there’s lots

of walking to be done. When Dubai gets its very own Legoland soon you’d be mad not to go.

There are several other world-beating children’s attractions on the edge of London, from the Thorpe Park and Chessington World Of Adventures theme parks, to the Wembley Stadium Tour, but it’s time for us to head home. I reckon the nearest we’ve been to the city centre is 26km, and yet we’ve seen one of the Queen’s homes (Windsor Castle), we’ve seen the London skyline (albeit in Lego) and we’ve even been for a ride in a black cab. Next time, we’re thinking we should go even further!

THE DETAILS

- Rooms at the five-star Luton Hoo hotel cost from around £280 (Dh1,610) per night, including breakfast. Suites cost from £480 – £1,100. www.lutonhoo.co.uk
- Tickets to The Warner Bros Studio Tour London (wbstudiotour.co.uk) must be booked in advance and cost £101 for a four-person family ticket.
- Tickets at Legoland Windsor start at about £40 with discounts if you book in advance. www.legoland.co.uk
- Flights with Emirates to London Heathrow start from about Dh3,400 return.



SUMMER IN VENICE

Forget pungent waterways and narrow streets constantly crowded with cruiseliner passengers, **Sarah Marshall** has discovered a secret side to this Italian city



The Floating City has a bit of a bad rep as a hot and sweaty summer destination, but that's not true in the sunny yet breezy Venetian Lagoon

F

Famous for being sticky, sweaty and (some might even cruelly claim) smelly during the height of summer, Venice is rarely relieved by a cool breeze. That probably explains why Isola delle Rose, a 16-hectare island south of San Marco, has always been known to Venetians as a jewel in the lagoon.

With temperatures at a balmy 31°C, I welcome the salty Adriatic sea breeze billowing the muslin drapes on my rooftop daybed. Operating as a sanatorium in the 1920s, the island offered recuperation to patients with pulmonary diseases. The hospital has since been replaced by a hotel, although rest and recuperation are still high on the agenda.

Made from the sand and soil dug out during the construction of the city's commercial port, Isola delle Rose is one of 35 islands in the Venetian Lagoon. While tourist hotspots such as Burano (famous for its colourful fishermen houses) and Murano (home to a world-renowned glass-blowing industry) are firmly on the map, other islands, which were once used to isolate plague victims, or even to house the insane in asylums, have been forgotten over ➔





The JW Marriott Venice is a seasonal hotel, open from March to October and is situated on its own island, offering an escape from crowds

time. Hoteliers, though, are starting to realise a hitherto missed opportunity. In March this year, JW Marriott Venice, a swish summer resort, opened on its own private island of Isola delle Rose. Operating from March to October, the hotel is set in the peaceful green grounds where century-old olive groves – quite unheard of this far north – flourish, thanks to the unique microclimate.

There are several seasonal hotels in Venice but this is a different concept; an escape from the summer madness that besets the city as cruiseliners deposit hordes of tourists in the narrow, labyrinthine streets.

While lazing in the rooftop infinity pool, I enjoy a clear, crowd-free view of Venice, or La Serenissima to locals. I'm told it's even possible to see the faint outline of the Alps on a good day.

It took 350 workers four years to complete the 250-room hotel, restoring original 19th-century buildings wherever possible. I stay in the main wing, with cool, neutral interiors, designed by Milan-based Matteo Thun. A conveyor belt of visitors churns through the busy reception area – which at times feels even more manic than San Marco – and



quirky touches, such as giant glass jars filled with complimentary jelly sweets, save the former hospital from feeling too clinical.

Outside the main building, several grain stores have been converted into garden villas, with private pools and trellises of fragrant jasmine. A pre-Romanesque church, although not consecrated, is available for event use, and an industrial water tower looks all-too-tempting to climb. Although it must have been a frustrating inconvenience for hotel planners, this protected piece of the Venetian skyline is, to my mind, a defining feature of Isola delle Rose. I wander through



the shady 19th-century gardens, landscaped to an original design, listening to birdsong. When the hospital closed in the 1970s, the island was abandoned for decades, and the overgrown linden forests became a favourite picnic spot for Venetians sneaking over in private boats.

Today, they can still moor up alongside the hotel, although the food now on offer is of a much higher standard. Presided over by renowned chef Gianfranco Perbellini, the gourmet Dopolavoro restaurant is well worth the 20-minute boat ride from Venice, even if you're not staying at the hotel. Once used as



When the one-time HOSPITAL closed in the 1970s, the island was ABANDONED for decades. Now the 19TH-CENTURY buildings have been RESTORED and transformed into a SWISH summer resort



Enjoy an afternoon at the onsite Savori Cooking Academy cooking regional dishes with chef Matteo



a social space by hospital workers (even the name, which means 'after work', is borrowed), the moody, mirror-filled restaurant is stirring up Venice's somewhat stale culinary scene with creative dishes such as zabaglione topped with caviar.

There are three other restaurants to dine in – breakfast bar Cucina; relaxed Sagra, serving a rotating menu of regional cuisine; and al fresco grill Giardino. At the on-site Savori Cooking Academy, I spend the afternoon with unfalteringly patient chef Matteo, learning the secret to a good tiramisu lies in a vat of mascarpone equivalent to a woman's

annual calorie count. Yet I still order the caffeine-kick dish (which Venetians like to claim as their own) for dessert. No less than twice a day I might add.

Never mind, there's plenty of opportunity to burn off cream-induced fat at the gym, or just to cheat with a body-contouring treatment at the Goco garden spa, the largest in Venice, with its sauna, steam room and a hydro-pool looking out to the lagoon. (Access to facilities costs an extra €25 or Dh100.) I try a QMS facial (€169), where oxygen is blasted on to my skin, stamping pesky crows' feet into submission, although

less invasive treatments are available using the organic Amala range.

While Isola delle Rose's trump card is its separation from Venice, it's also the hotel's main drawback. A regular 20-minute shuttle service runs to San Marco until 1am, but the 9am start is a little too late to avoid crowds.

However, that's probably a concern for Venice first-timers who prefer to be in the thick of the action. Returning visitors will relish a chance to weave beyond bricole poles and delve further into the salt marshes, discovering new jewels in the regal city's crown.





Islands like San Servolo were used to house monks and hospitals before being rediscovered as tourist destinations

TAKE A DETOUR TO LESSER-KNOWN ISLANDS IN THE VENETIAN LAGOON

SAN SERVOLO

Lying opposite Isola delle Rose, this island was inhabited by Benedictine monks from the eighth century. It was later used as a military hospital, and then a place to care for the mentally ill. It's now home to Venice International University.

Explore the pretty gardens, filled with medicinal plants once used by the hospital and now functioning as an exhibition space for the Venice Biennale.

Entry is free, but the Insane Asylum Museum (open Friday to Sunday from May to September) costs €6 per person.

To get there, take the vaporetto line 20 (€7 one way) from San Zaccaria, close to San Marco (it'll take about 10 minutes).

☎ See www.sanservolo.provincia.venezia.it

SAN LAZZARO DEGLI ARMENI

The next stop from San Servolo, en route to the Lido, this wonderful island belongs to an order of Armenian monks. Over the centuries, literary figures – including Lord Byron, who



allegedly learned Armenian here in just six months – have flocked to this retreat.

Multilingual monks still conduct public tours daily at 3.30pm, visiting the church, refectory and library filled with precious books. Look out for interesting artefacts including an Egyptian mummy! Tickets for the tour cost €6.

The Republic of Armenia was recently named the national winner of the 56th Biennale, and the artwork is on



display here until November 22. To get there, take the vaporetto line 20 from San Zaccaria, close to San Marco (about 13 minutes).

☎ Call +39 (0)41 526 0104 for details.

VIGNOLE

Dominated by poppy fields and allotments, this residential island is visited by Venetians seeking a sleepy afternoon in the cradle of nature. A public footpath leads to the remains of a seventh-century church, but continue



Returning visitors will enjoy exploring the lesser known areas of this multifaceted city like poppy fields of Vignole and heaps of delicious seafood



Over the centuries, LITERARY FIGURES – including LORD BYRON, who allegedly learned Armenian here in just six months – have flocked to San Lazzaro degli Armeni island. MONKS still conduct tours daily

over a bridge to the simple, waterfront Trattoria alle Vignole (open for lunch and dinner from mid-May to September), serving pizzas and seafood dishes (from €8).

Looking out to San Pietro di Castello, the first cathedral of Venice, it's a great place to watch the sunset. Just beware of the pesky mosquitoes!

To get there, take the vaporetto line 13 from Fondamente Nove (20 minutes).

☎ Call +39 (0)41 528 9707 for details.

GETTING THERE

■ Sarah Marshall was a guest of the JW Marriott Venice, where rooms start from €395 (around Dh1,600) per night, including breakfast.

■ Emirates flies direct to Venice from around Dh3,600 return.



SORE NO MORE

Kia's new Sorento showcases the next step in the brand's design language, and more importantly, takes giant strides in quality and refinement, says *wheels'* **Sony Thomas**



W

With a mix of prejudice and anticipation, I flew to Jordan late last year to test-drive Kia's new Sorento SUV. Prejudice because of the not-so-great experience of piloting previous generations of the Sorento, and anticipation due to the promising experiences behind the wheel of many a new Kia saloon, especially the Quoris, Cadenza and the Cerato.

After driving the latest iteration on mountain roads and highways along the Dead Sea region, I realised that it was time to set prejudices aside when approaching a new Kia, as the Sorento

reiterated the fact that a stylish, well-built and refined Kia is no longer surprising. Now that the Sorento has reached our market, I decided to get my hands on it and, as we do with every car we've driven elsewhere, see how it fares on our home turf.

Like Hyundai's Fluidic Sculpture 2.0, which was debuted in the recent Genesis saloon, the all-new Sorento is the first vehicle to herald the next step in Kia's design language. Although the styling changes are evolutionary compared to the previous generation, bolder lines, along with the new upright tiger-nose grille and hawk-eye headlights, give it a thoroughly modern and more aggressive look. It's also grown; it's longer than before by 95mm, wider by 5.0mm and with an 80mm longer wheelbase. This has freed up room in the cabin, where the redesign is even more apparent.

Significantly more sophisticated looking than before, the new Sorento's

interior has seen a dramatic upgrade in styling as well as the quality of materials used and the way they're all put together. Kia has managed to leave the centre console clutter free by grouping all the buttons you'll need to control essential functions into a cluster in the middle of the dashboard.



The new Sorento is significantly more sophisticated looking, and the changes aren't restricted to just the exterior



Bolder lines, along with the new upright tiger-nose grille and hawk-eye headlights, lend a modern and more aggressive look

'I realised that it was TIME to set PREJUDICES ASIDE when approaching a NEW KIA, as the Sorento reiterated the fact that a STYLISH, well-built and REFINED Kia is NO longer SURPRISING'

And as has been the practice for some time now, Kia includes a dedicated button for a Qibla compass in cars that come to the Middle East.

Once you settle down into the 14-way power-adjustable driver's seat and start driving, it's easy to see that the changes run much deeper than the exterior and the cabin. Steering is much-improved compared to the previous Sorento, which appeared a bit too light on the mountains of Jordan, but seemed surefooted enough on the smoothly paved, straight roads out here.

There's ample feedback at highway speeds, building up reassuring levels

of heft in the wheel without making the car feel heavy as such. There is a Sport mode button on the centre console, but don't expect a sporty drive as nothing perceptible happens to the steering, transmission or suspension if you press that switch.

The 3.3-litre V6, which is also the same engine that powers Hyundai's Santa Fe Grand, with which the Sorento also shares a platform, is smooth and refined, with 270bhp and 318Nm on tap. The DynaMax all-wheel drive system apparently keeps a close watch on the steering wheel angle and other driving inputs to dispatch torque to the corner that needs it most, which is also apparent in the way the Sorento negotiates curves and interchange loops, although these won't be as pleasant for rear passengers who reported significant body roll.

Add to all of this segment-leading features such as adaptive cruise control, lane-departure warning, blind-spot detection, lane-change assist and rear cross-traffic alert, and the Sorento becomes a very attractive proposition in its class.

Those car buyers in the region who are willing to set aside their prejudices about brand image and give Kia a fair chance will definitely have no reason to regret it.



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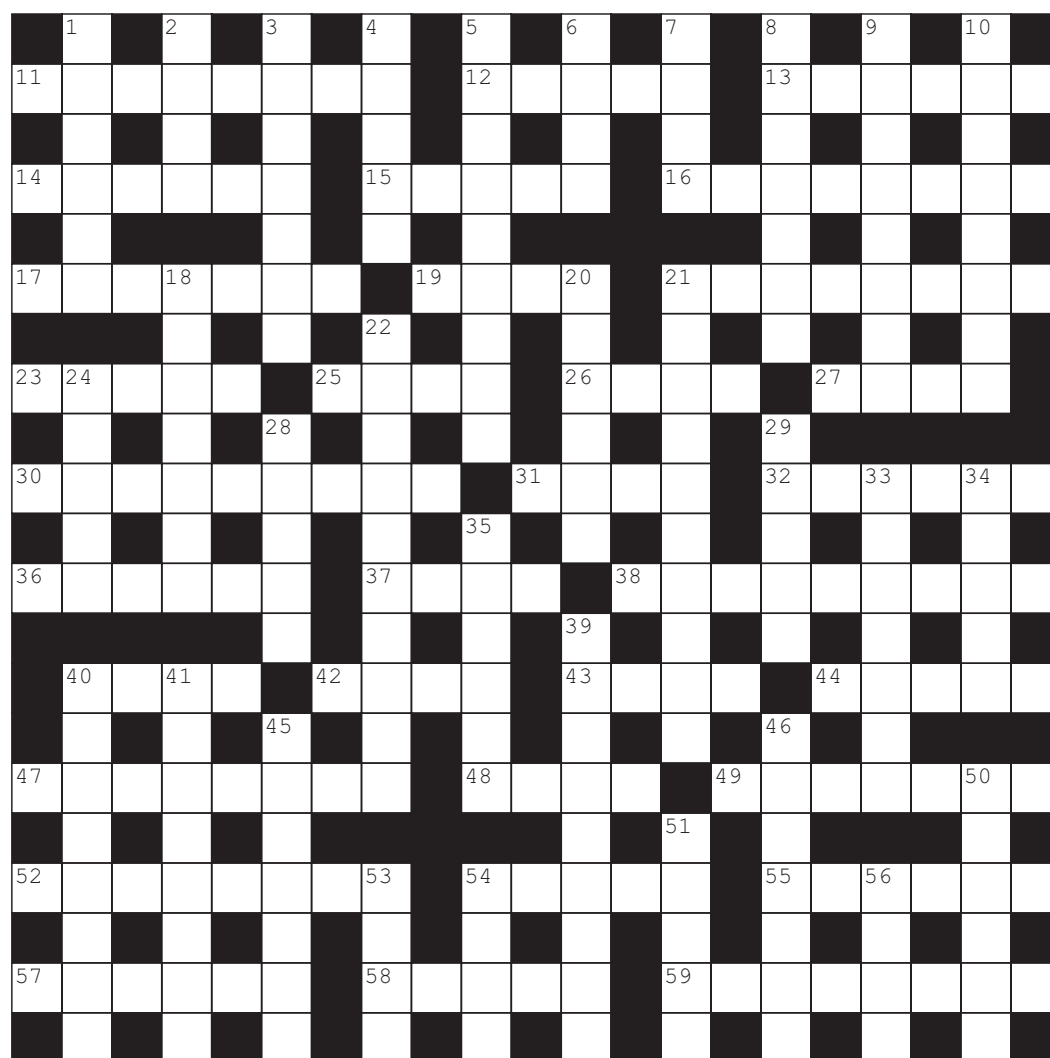


KIA SORENTO

Engine	3.3-litre V6
Transmission	Six-speed auto, AWD
Max power	270bhp @ 6,400rpm
Max torque	318Nm @ 5,300rpm
Top speed	210kph
0-100kph	8.2sec
Length	4,780mm
Width	1,890mm
Height	1,685mm
Wheelbase	3,360mm
Weight	1,733kg
On sale	Now
Price	Dh130,000 (as tested)
Highs	Looks, ride quality, engine, cabin
Lows	Third row seats are tight

PUZZLES

Time to steal a quiet moment and flex your brain with *Friday's* puzzle pages



ACROSS

- 11** Pen name of the novelist Dora Saint, appointed MBE in 1998, who is remembered for her books set in the English countryside such as *Summer at Fairacre* and *Thrush Green* (4,4)
- 12** Valley located near a river of the same name known as the “garden of France” and “playground of kings” because of its rolling hills, vineyards and more than 1,000 châteaux (5)
- 13** Type of fish eaten smoked with ingredients such as blini, chives, cream cheese or scrambled eggs (6)
- 14** Optical disc format that was designed to supersede the DVD in terms of high-definition content and the amount of data it can retain (3-3)
- 15** Also known as an abalone, mollusc eaten in France and Channel Islands including Guernsey and Jersey (5)
- 16** Naturally occurring human feelings or

- responses; around 600 words in English used to describe them and 42 facial muscles to express them (8)
- 17** Austria's name when it was part of Nazi Germany from 1938-42 (7)
- 19** Founded in the 11th century and known as Christiania (or Kristiania) from 1624 until 1924, the capital of the country in which the Geirangerfjord and Nærøfjord are located (4)
- 21** In botany, the rootstocks of galangal, ginger, irises, lily of the valley, lotus and turmeric (8)
- 23** Born in Edinburgh in 1918, novelist who wrote books including *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, *Loitering with Intent* and *A Far Cry From Kensington* (5)
- 25** Greek cup-bearer and goddess of eternal youth; wife of Hercules and daughter of Zeus and Hera (4)
- 26** Type of window Robert Hooke is credited with inventing (4)

- 27** _____ and *Abuses of Psychology*; 1953 book by HJ Eysenck (4)
- 30** The common name of the self-seeding cottage or country-style garden plant with tall stems of peach, pink, yellow, red or white flowers, *Althaea rosea* (9)
- 31** Looked after by apiculturists, creatures that communicate via a form of “dancing” and are the only insects to produce food eaten by humans (4)
- 32** Roman lyric poet who wrote the collections *Odes* and *Satires* (6)
- 36** From the Latin meaning “dug up”, an item studied by a palaeontologist (6)
- 37** Hard-boiled _____ and nuts; Stan's gift of food to Ollie in the Laurel and Hardy film *County Hospital* (4)
- 38** Ship on which 102 passengers (known as Pilgrims) set sail for 66 days from Plymouth to America in 1620 (9)
- 40** Protein-rich food known as bean curd served marinated in various dishes with

noodles, in miso soup or coated in sesame seeds and fried (4)

42 G - _____; furniture range manufactured since the Second World War (4)

43 Also called a killer whale, the largest member of the dolphin family (4)

44 The founder of the BBC (5)

47 Organic compounds such as ascorbic acid, biotin, niacin, retinol, riboflavin and thiamine (8)

48 Elton John and Tim Rice musical production; or, a mesh-like material used for cross-stitch embroidery (4)

49 Alpine cheese used in dishes such as fondue, gratin, fish pie, croque-monsieur or served grilled on croutons with French onion soup (7)

52 German expressionist painter who co-founded the Die Brücke group (8)

54 Item used in curling or the game Go; or, the seed of an almond, apricot, cherry, olive, peach or plum (5)

55 Wealthy principality and world's second-smallest country; site of a recent Grand Prix in which Lewis Hamilton was wrongly pitted due to a team blunder (6)

57 Planet with a ring system discovered in 1610 by Galileo Galilei (6)

58 The _____; skyscraper around a mile from 30 St Mary Axe (The Gherkin) (5)

59 Prime minister of France at the start of the Second World War (8)

DOWN

1 Brain anatomy research pioneer who co-founded the Royal Society (6)

2 River, tributary of the Danube (4)

3 City (under its former name) given to the Duke of York in 1664 as a gift on his 18th birthday; today site of the One World Observatory (3,4)

4 Spanish word meaning farewell (5)

5 European artists working prior to 1800 such as Goya, Raphael or Vermeer (3,6)

6 Couturier whose style elements such as nipped-in waists and full pleated skirts formed the New Look (4)

7 Middle Eastern or Greek-style tapas such as hummus or dolmas (4)

8 Country, site of the city Tartu (7)

9 US "Land of Lincoln" state (8)

10 Bat-and-ball team game (8)

18 Elgin _____; sculptures recently linked with Amal Clooney (7)

20 Mollusc with a pair of shucks (6)

21 Underground movement that was also known as the Maquis (10)

22 Archipelago of 115 islands in the Indian Ocean, capital Victoria (10)

24 _____ finish; neck-and-neck race (5)

28 Mollusc _____; item studied or collected by a conchologist (5)

29 Word linking dress, key and red (5)

SUDOKU

9	3	1	4	6	2	5	8	7
4	8	7	5	1	9	6	2	3
6	5	2	8	3	7	9	4	1
5	9	4	7	2	1	3	6	8
8	2	6	3	5	4	7	1	9
1	7	3	6	9	8	2	5	4
2	4	9	1	7	5	8	3	6
3	1	5	9	8	6	4	7	2
7	6	8	2	4	3	1	9	5

Solution to July 17 sudoku

				8		4		
			9		3		2	
			6			7	3	1
	8	2			6			
6					7		8	
	1		3	9			5	6
4		3						
	2	1		4	9			
		6			2			

33 Breeding colony of seals or turtles (7)

34 Horse's mane; plume of feathers; or, the top of a hill or wave (5)

35 Country, capital Kampala (6)

39 English clergyman who wrote *The Diary of a Country Parson* (9)

40 The "Land of the Hummingbird" (8)

41 Radioactive element present in uranium ores, atomic number 87 (8)

45 Event for an author to autograph copies of books for fans (7)

46 Blackberry shrub or its fruit (7)

50 Plant used to make pesto or flavour stone-baked pizza with prosciutto (6)

51 Storybook by Johanna Spyri (5)

53 Fragrant flower, source of attar (4)

54 Symbol on the Moroccan flag (4)

56 Renoir painting; or, a catch-all term for flesh-coloured hosiery with varying shades for different skin tones (4)

Solutions will be given next week. The last date for entries is July 28. The winner will be announced on August 7.



Submit your entry with your contact details to Friday, PO Box 6519, Dubai, UAE or fax them to 04 342 1527. Winners need to collect their prize from the *Gulf News* Dubai office. Details are sent to winners via email. Entries are open to everyone, but winners have to be UAE residents.

A sudoku grid has a 9x9 grid that is further subdivided into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve the puzzle, each of the rows, columns and 3x3 boxes should contain all the digits from 1 to 9. The solution to this puzzle will be published in next week's issue.

SOLUTIONS TO JULY 17

ACROSS: 9 Wodehouse

10 Charlotte 12 Bronze 13 Lazio

14 Tiberius 15 Odyssey 17 Black

19 Alciati 22 ASBO 24 Haiku

25 Soup 26 Thorn 29 Mackenzie

30 Blue 31 Valley 35 Osprey

37 Root 38 Sforzando 40 Organ

43 Lion 44 Block 45 Norn

47 Cumbria 48 Bytes 49 Rendell

54 Lawrence 55 Jetty 56 Canopy

58 Bismuthic 59 Velveteen

DOWN: 1 Odin 2 Phoebe 3 Quill

4 Berzelius 5 Echo 6 Watts 7 Old

Bill 8 Starfish 9 World 11 Equator

16 Snooker 18 Casals 20 Kiwi fruit

21 Superfood 23 Swans 24 Henrys

27 Owl 28 Dvorak 32 Learned

33 Eider 34 Bounty 36 Pug

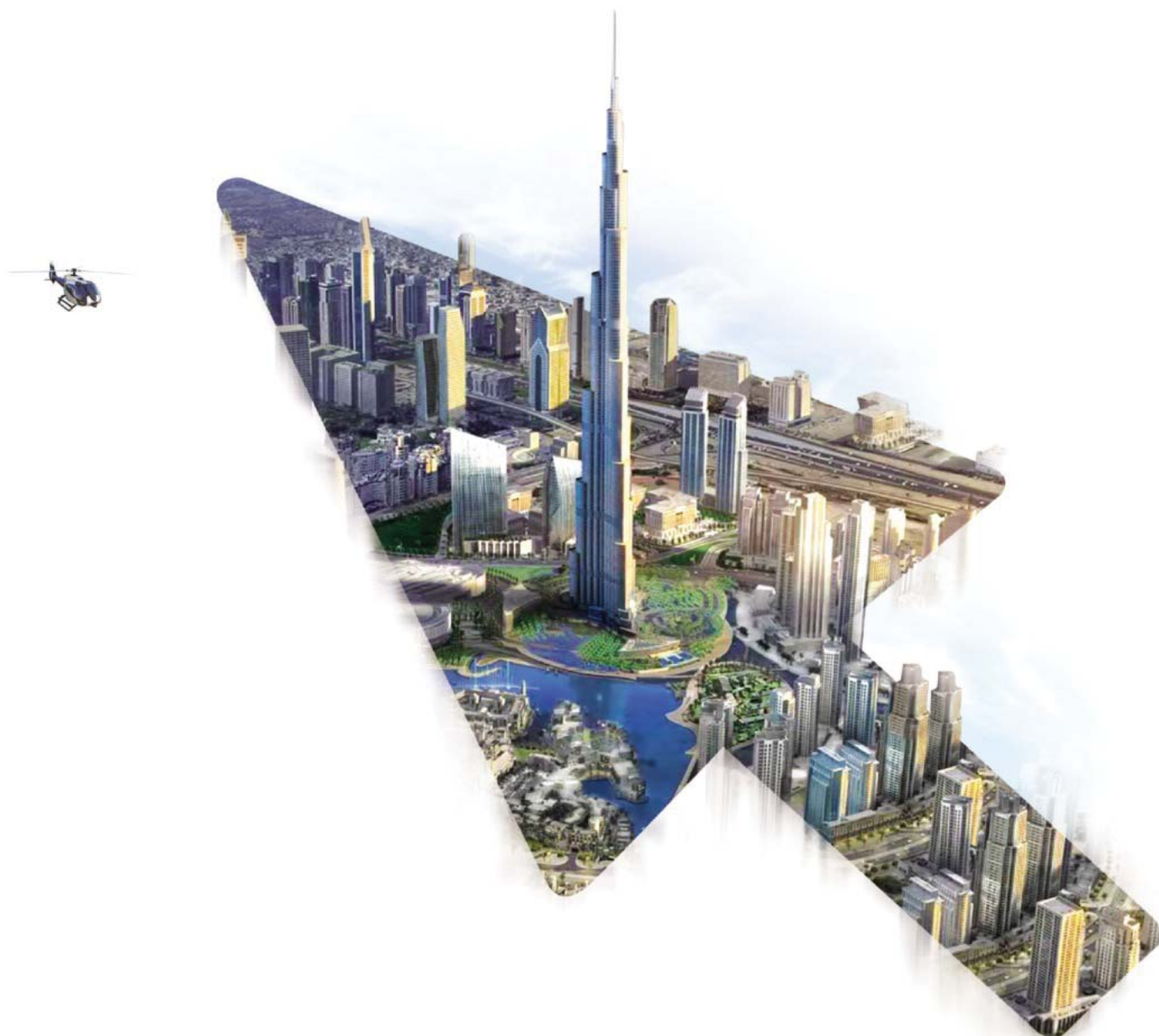
39 Objective 41 Rhubarb

42 Arborist 46 Vilnius 50 Eccles

51 Lupin 52 Leche 53 Cycle

55 Jack 57 Need

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DAD'S DAY? IT'S A DUD

Suresh Menon is a writer based in India. In his youth he set out to change the world but later decided to leave it as it is



I know it's been more than a month since we celebrated Father's Day, but it took me this long to come up with an opinion. And after giving this important topic a lot of thought, here's my conclusion: we don't need a Father's Day. And not just because we don't deserve it – although there's a strong argument there – but because of the stress it causes fathers.

I am, like some research studies, basing my entire theory on the experiences of one father, a friend, who, for days leading up to the big day thought his children were throwing him a surprise party. And giving him surprise gifts, perhaps a car or something of roughly equal value. Or at least a mug with the legend

what makes them special. And deserving of Mother's Day.

Similar arguments can be made for Secretary's Day, and the Guy-Who-Drops-the-Newspaper-at-Your-Door Day. But Father's Day? My son, perhaps understanding that it is yet another trick by marketing men to sell products, doesn't bother. I am old enough that if he did call up and wish me 'Happy Father's Day', the shock might do me serious bodily harm.

I suggest we drop Father's Day from the calendar and introduce something more useful and universal like Doorman's Day. Doormen deserve to be recognised, especially if they are fathers and have just had their favourite day in the year drop out of the calendar. Fathers must learn to bite the bullet,

Tell us what you think, email us at friday@gulfnews.com

I suggest we DROP FATHER'S DAY from the CALENDAR and INTRODUCE something more useful like DOORMAN'S DAY. Doormen should be RECOGNISED, especially if they are FATHERS

'World's Greatest Dad' printed on it. He could barely contain his excitement, something he shared with the rest of us despite our entreaties not to do so.

'Maybe not a car, perhaps they are giving me an expensive painting,' he speculated. Later he said, 'I will be satisfied with a motorbike, actually.'

Mothers don't work themselves up thus. And in any case they do more, let's face it.

Mums remember not only their kids' names, but also their dates of birth and the weather on the day when their first tooth fell out. They weep when they see a name that rhymes with that of their son or daughter, and they don't expect cars or mugs or anything. That's

and be able to tell the odd child who does call, 'April Fools; Father's Day has been abolished, so you just wasted a call.'

So how did my friend's story end, you ask, and I will tell you. He woke up on the morning of the day dedicated to him, ran outside to check and – yes, you guessed it – there was no new car on the driveway, no two-wheeler, not even two wheels.

But there was a mug (apart from himself, that is). It sat on the dining table with a ribbon around it, and the legend, 'World's Greatest Dad.' No, we don't need a Father's Day.

THE WORLD IS MY HOME

I split my time visiting my yoga centres in Mumbai and Delhi, Moscow, Dubai, Japan, Nepal and the UK. So my weekend activities vary. But recently in Tokyo I enjoyed visiting the Olsen hot springs.

**DADDY COOL**

I love spending time with my son Yash. He's one and a half and so cute! I can spend the day just watching his expressions. In Dubai, I take him to Al Maha Desert Resort and Spa to relax.

GADGET GEEK

Shopping for electronics is my indulgence. I like to keep up-to-date on the latest innovations. I recently splurged on Anthony Gallo Acoustics speakers to enjoy listening to soothing Sufi music.

**FILM FEVER**

My wife Bhoomika Chawla is a Bollywood actress and I love watching movies at home, not the cinema. I don't enjoy public places a lot. I can watch up to four films in a day, but my favourite is *Forrest Gump*. It shows that to grow in life you don't need brains. A simple and determined heart can take you anywhere.



Bharat Thakur

My fabulous Friday

The international yoga guru and founder of Artistic Yoga talks about how watching movies, bonding with his son and shopping for gadgets are his favourite weekend comforts

**FITNESS FACTS**

I keep fit by doing two hours of yoga daily. Three times a week I practise an endurance activity like cycling, swimming or hiking. I generally do it in the early morning or just before dinner.

**SEASIDE SOLACE**

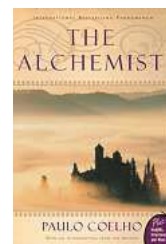
Whenever I am in Dubai or Mumbai, I love going swimming in the sea. I also like fishing. In fact, boats are my favourite way to hang out. I like going to places that are not too crowded, where I can be introspective and think about my life and work. That is how I like to unwind.

FUN WITH FOOD

I'm a foodie and love cooking for my friends and family. Russian lamb, rogan josh and aloo dum are my specialities. I detox with salads, while kheer is my guilty pleasure.

BOOKED AND HOOKED

Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist* is a book I can read over and over again. Every time I read it, I feel like new and there's a fresh message and meaning to it.

**PERFECT PERFUME**

I love spritzing on pure sandalwood attar or eucalyptus. Amouage Epic is my favourite because I love woody oud. It combines spice and pungency in a way that makes me feel like a king when I wear it.

**EATING OUT**

Sanjeev Kapoor at Melia, and Zuma are the two restaurants I enjoy going to in Dubai. At Melia I love tucking into kebabs, dal makhani, rogan josh and biryani, while Zuma's prawn dishes are some of my all-time favourites.



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